

THE MAN
IN THE STREET
AND RELIGION

HARRIS A. JENKINS

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Jenkins

The man in the street and
religion

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**THE MAN IN THE STREET
AND RELIGION**

The Man in the Street and Religion

BY
BURRIS A. JENKINS



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To

MY FRIEND,

THE MAN IN THE STREET

PREFATORY NOTE

THE author makes no attempt, in this little book, to be systematically theological. He has no such purpose, even if he had the needful ability. He has made only the attempt to state what he believes to be some of the prevailing popular conceptions of religious truth, in a popular manner; to trace some of the implications and results; and to indicate what seem to him to be the lines upon which these popular beliefs are likely to grow and should be encouraged to grow.

The "modern instances" set forth by way of illustration, unless otherwise stated, were either shared in by the author or came under his personal observation.

Years ago in a small class in English composition at Harvard University, a "daily theme" of the present writer's was undergoing dissection at the hands of the late Prof. A. S. Hill, of rhetorical memory. At last the critic tartly observed:

"This narrative would do very well, if it had the ring of truth. It does not make the impression that the incident ever took place."

"But, Professor," triumphantly replied the

young student, "it is true. I was there and saw it all."

"That may well be," snapped the old gentleman; "but you must make it *sound true*."

The student was stung by the splendor of a sudden thought and a new one; and ever since that day he has lived in mortal terror of telling something that did not sound true. He has, therefore, thought it necessary to add this word of asseveration, lest at any time he may have been lacking in verisimilitude.

For one or two of the outlines of chapters the author may be indebted to conversations held many years ago with a pioneer preacher in the West, Alexander Proctor. He is glad to acknowledge this and many other intellectual obligations to this wise old man.

B. A. J.

KANSAS CITY, MO.

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I

HE ALSO IS A CHILD OF GOD

TIME was when men were urged to "get religion." The assumption was that it was a commodity to be obtained, a will-o'-the-wisp, the pot of gold at the end of some rainbow, to be pursued and, if possible, captured. We are at last dimly discerning that men have got religion already. They do not need to get it. They only need to develop it.

Religion is not an extraneous article, a gem, a talisman, an amulet, a rare exotic, a philosopher's stone, to be sought high and low, far and near, and painfully added to the spiritual furniture or treasure-house. The pearl of greatest price is not religion, but the Kingdom of God; and if the Kingdom of God means anything, it means the progressive dominion of the Father in the "Dark Chamber," in the soul of His child. To purchase this, one may well sell his all.

To look upon the seething mass of men in the city streets, or on the countryside, the navy in the ditch or on the right-of-way, the chauff-

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feur and the engine-man, the plumber and the plutocrat, the man with the hoe and the man with the quirt, the clerk and the architect, the child of the silver spoon and the child of the rookery, and to declare that all alike are religious, naturally religious, seems a daring stand to take. But that is the precise position to which we are beginning to come. The man in the street, the common man, Walt Whitman's average man, the composite made up of the myriads, the sum of all sorts and conditions,—he, the wonderful, the acme of all the great Creator's work so far as we can see, despite "the sin wherewith the face of man is blackened," he also is a son of God; he has religion.

He may not believe it; he may stoutly deny it; but he is simply unaware. "I religious?" he may say. "You are mistaken, man. I do not go to church. I have not seen the inside of a church in twenty years. I don't believe in it. I believe in getting what I can out of life, its goods, its pleasures. I live for the day. Let the future take care of itself." Pressed further, he may declare: "If I have any religion, it is humanity. My lodge is my religion. 'Do as you would be done by'; that is my religion." If it is brought to his attention that even these, after all, are religion, he will shake

his head solemnly and earnestly, saying: "I am not a religious man. My neighbor Brown, my neighbor Jones, they are naturally religious. They go to church, they pass the plate, they lead the singing, they like to pray in meeting. I am not like that. No, I am an irreligious man. I am not sure I believe in anything."

His very solemnity is earnest of his substratum of religion. He is only ill-informed as to what religion is; thinks it is a matter of vocal sound, of plate-passing, church building, nail-driving, "church-work," busy-ness. He is unaware of the deep vibrations in his own soul answering the notes of the voice of God, deep calling unto deep. He is unconsciously uttering the only heresy there is, the denial of his own sonship to God; for to deny that one is religious is to deny that God is one's Father, and to assert that He blundered in making one, that He is no God.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "There are one-story intellects, two-story intellects, and three-story intellects with skylights." Ay, but there are none but three-story souls, and all of them open to the light of God. Their skylights may be blurred and blackened, soot-covered and frosted; the stairways may be clogged, rickety, and vile; but every glass may be cleared, every step mended, and the light

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that never was on sea or land flood every nook and cranny of them all.

Those inarticulate stirrings of the soul, deep and almost insensate rumblings in cavernous depths, that answer to the moods of nature, to music, to the mysteries in humanity—its heroisms, its criminalities—these are index, are they not, to the God-kinship, possibly rudimentary, arrested in development, smothered and choked, but indubitably existent in the unmarked galleries of man's mammoth cave.

“Like tides on a crescent sea-beach,
When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts high yearnings
Come welling and surging in,—
In from the mystic ocean
Whose rim no foot has trod,—
Some of us call it longing,
And others call it God.”

Let us test the man in the street and see if these things indeed be so.

He is playing, on an afternoon of early spring, over an oak-and-elm-lined golf-course. He is distinctly a man of the world, a corporation lawyer, one would say offhand a materialist. Suddenly on the edge of number three green he stops, stands as in a dream, his stick listlessly held in hand, his ball forgotten, his eyes seeking the green fastnesses of the great

overhanging oak. His absorbed and eager opponent putts alone. At last the latter looks up and asks, "What is it?"

"Oh, nothing," comes the answer. "Only the first mocking-bird I've heard this year."

Then the two trudge on under a radiant canopy of song; and the man of the world bears the imprint of the music through the afternoon. Whose voice has been speaking to his breast? Not the bird's alone.

A sailorman is standing his midnight watch in the waist of a little brigantine in the south Pacific. The moon floods with light the still, phosphorescent waters, scarcely stirred with a breath of wind; and the Southern Cross hangs yonder on the rim of the world. A sleepless passenger moves out for a breath of air, and pauses to listen as he hears the lonely sailor's softly hummed song:

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly"—

The sailor's hymn! Beecher said he would rather have written it than to have sat on all the thrones of all the kingdoms of this world. This sailor heard it from some Salvation Army squad, in some seaman's mission, or in some far-away rural Sunday school of childhood; there may be no grain of religion in his me-

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chanical singing. Well, move forward, passenger, and talk with him an hour on the deck of the little sail-ship, in midocean, in the midnight. Just give him rein, let him speak out. God is holding soft and dim converse in the heart of a rough man.

A young student stands at the side of a mogul-engine on a trans-continental railway. He begs the engine-man for a ride in the cab. "I know it's contrary to rules, but I promise not to talk."

A moment's scrutiny through great steel-rimmed spectacles from a pair of piercing eyes, set under the black, beetling brows of a great head, on the massive shoulders of six-feet-three; then,

"All right. Climb in."

Away over the great divide; across the alkali desert; glimmering water off miles to the right; a violated promise, and "What lake is that, Cap?" "No lake at all. Mirage!" hurled backward over a shoulder through the cab-window. Then, hour after hour, fifty miles to the hour, through sage and mesquite and chaparral, past the Sink of the Humboldt, past the twilight, into the night.

At a watering-tank, the young man swings down.

"Much obliged, and good-night;" and, as

he starts back to the Pullman, to his surprise the engine-man reaches out a great hand and grips his own and holds it. They had never seen each other before that day; knew nothing of each other. Finally, after another long piercing look downward from the great black eyes, the engine-man says:

"Pray for us, will you?"

"Certainly. Are you a religious man?"

"No. Once was. Not any more. Good-night."

They never met again; but the lad never forgot that face. He would know it in a thousand, over twenty years after. It was the face of a child of God, roughened and seamed and scarred, a child that needed his Father—and he knew it. Please God, he has found Him.

One more picture. It is a sportsmen's camp in Oklahoma, by a stream, under great trees, deep in a thicket through which a path is cut to the camp-fire and the tent. The night is clear and still; stars are all over the sky; it is crisp and cold. Far off to the southeast a pack of hounds is opening, and far off to the northeast another is answering. Horn is calling to horn, as the two packs converge to the rendezvous at the camp. One of the hunters strolls out through the thicket-path and sees what he supposes to be bolls of cotton on the stems, lying

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scattered about the underbrush. But next morning his Oklahoma friend calls to him, saying:

"Come here, see! The strangest thing, and the most beautiful thing you ever saw!"

Those apparent cotton-bolls were frost flowers woven around the stem of a peculiar weed—only this one kind of weed and no other—by the fingers of the King of carvers. Whatever the scientific explanation, whether due to the exuding sap, the exhalations of the plant, there they were,—the lilies of the frost, the roses of the night, large as American Beauties, and pure white as the snow.

The Oklahoma man was no church-man. He had ridden in when the strip was opened and had fought then, as he fights now, for his stake. But he was in a visible ecstasy over the frost-artistry. He could talk of nothing else for an hour. Whether he thought of the humble, broken, defaced lives that were like this weed, around which the Great Artist weaves the flowers of His subtle, delicate beauty, who shall say? But the stirring of the soul was clear to the observer; the ecstasy was enough, in the kindly eyes and the honest face, to teach the kinship between the Artist and His offspring. God's weaving had been not in vain.

But why multiply instances? They are pat-

ent everywhere to him who will look and see. The field is white to harvest. The seed of God is thick in the soil of men. The answer is universal to His natural, His holy laws.

It is not merely to him who in the love of nature holds communion with her visible forms that she speaks a various language; but it is also to the rough plainsman who rides alone the fences of a short-grass ranche, to the yokel on the thankless rocky hills of a New England or an Ozark farm, to the milkman leaving his early bottles on the steps under a rising sun, to the negro sluicing down those steps of a summer morning. To all of these come, now and again, perhaps dimly perceived, perhaps not perceived at all, the voices of earth, air, and sky, as really as came the voices of the stars to those nomadic peoples on the Syrian plain who manifested so evident a genius for religion.

It is not merely to the Italian or the German, nurtured in homes of music, that harmonies come with nameless emotions, sounding the deep places of the soul, and render restless as by an angel's troubling the waters of the inner pools. It may be but the response of a barbarous heart to a tom-tom, a semi-savage to a brazen cymbal, a negro to a banjo, or a Swede farm hand to a wheezing accordion, but it is

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none the less a response. It is deep calling unto deep. Very rudimentary may be these intimations of religion, but they are there.

It is not merely to the learned in history that the knowledge of the movements of the tribes and nations, the rise and decline of kingdoms, dynasties, empires, comes with a certain awe; but also to the common man come moments when the clash of arms, the wreck of ocean greyhounds, the storms of unreasoning hate that rage between nations divided by a narrow frith, strike him dumb with wonder and awe. Kings and governments, power and pageantry, daze and drug him; the crowd-psychology that he does not fathom sweeps him along; he thrills instantly to the heroic; he answers angrily to the dastardly; his spine crinkles and crawls under the spell of a national anthem or marching song, while tears of which he is ashamed spring in his eyes. Altogether he is a wonderful instrument, of many strings and subtleties, vibrating, constantly vibrating in under- and over-tones, to the tremendous diapason of his Father's playing on the great pipes of the world.

Be blest with large contacts with common men, all kinds of men, and, though you will find them often mean, often hard, often cruel, reckless, dangerous, eaten up with self, yet

you will on occasion, at some moment of unconscious strain and test, find them gentle, kind, responsive, blunderingly emotional, even awkwardly sentimental. The rougher and the harder they ordinarily are, the kinder and the more discerning and even delicate they sometimes become. It is not contact with men that destroys faith in men. It is isolation, physical or spiritual, that makes the misanthrope.

Some three thousand years ago, well-nigh in the infancy of the race, a daring, dashing, blood-stained outlaw—who held toward the ordered governments of men some such position as a modern Mexican bandit—was hemmed in by his enemies in a narrow plain. One night, in a fit of homesickness, he gave audible expression to a yearning for his boyhood home, and a drink from the spring where he had watched his father's sheep. Three of his retainers, taking their lives in their hands, stole through the hostile lines, ran through the night, and by morning returned with a cruse of water from the well of Bethlehem. David took it in his hand, looked deep into the eyes of his devoted followers, then, saying:

“How can I drink the blood of my mighty men?” he poured the water on the ground as a libation to his God.

An act of sentiment this, of sentiment pure

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and simple. You would scarcely expect to find it in a man of such type? That is precisely where to expect it. They are the kind of men capable of the "Shepherd Psalm" or the "Song of the Open Road." Men upon the seven seas or the seven hills or the seven plains,—lumberjacks, seamen, farm hands, machinists and their helpers, gamblers on 'change, bartenders, sometimes even wealthy men, and almost always negroes, have in their hearts some corner, small or large, where dwells a great love or longing, a protective instinct or deep generosity, an ideal or an image worshipped, for which, if need were, they would sell their lives. Indeed, no man is much good who would not die for something or somebody.

Here is a modern example of the same heroic sentiment, the same spirit of devoted friendship:

Three young men, boyhood friends of the author, started in 1898 for the Klondyke with the gold seekers. Their outfit was the best that money could buy, fifteen hundred pounds to the man. They were young lads about town in a Western city, of excellent families, well taught, well mothered and well fathered. They had some of the old frontier blood in their veins.

The youngest of the three—Shelley was his name—was the best known to the present

writer. He was not what you might call a religious lad. That is, he seldom appeared in Sunday schools; and he had doubtless not been in a prayer meeting since carried there in his mother's arms. But that same mother put a little Testament into his kit, saying:

"Shelley, when you get among those ice-mountains, you must not forget God."

Shelley smiled indulgently, and kissed his mother good-bye.

The going was easy enough by rail and water. But when they struck the terrors of the Skagway Trail, and especially when they came, after days and days of the utmost hardship and peril, to the Chilkoot Pass, where men sat down and whimpered like children, alternately cursed and prayed, died by scores and were tumbled over icy precipices out of the way, then it was that Shelley got out his little Testament. Every night he it was, this lad of all others, who, gathering his companions together in the tent, or round the fire, said:

"Boys, we must not forget God." He read to them. He even prayed aloud with them and for them, and they were grateful.

At Chilkoot Pass an avalanche had buried teams of dogs and many men. For two days these boys worked with others to rescue any smothering survivors and to clear the trail. On

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the third Shelley was seized with meningitis, fatal to so many of those adventurers, and died.

One of the lads stayed with the stuff to sell it; and the other, wrapping the frozen body of his friend in canvas, started with it back to civilization. Eight days and nights, over almost impassable trails of ice and snow, most of the time with the dead body upon his shoulders, he fought his way back to open water, and so home to Shelley's mother.

Most men, in those days, were left where they fell. In Cuba they were buried; in the Klondyke they were not. But here was one man brought back to his mother because he had a friend. Many heroic deeds were performed in those years of the closing century by young American lads, in the lead-laden breeze of Guantanamo, in the thick sad swamps of Luzon, among the ice-mountains of the Far North; but there was no more heroic deed among them all than that of Paschal Parker who, for friendship's sake, bore home upon his shoulders, all alone, the dead body of Shelley Gill.

No matter if a man has defaced the image of his parenthood, wilfully and rebelliously defaced it; that image is there. If he examine himself he will find it. Said Monsieur Madeleine, Mayor of M.-sur-M., to a company of

farmers, "Remember this; there are no bad plants and no bad men. There are only bad cultivators." An old man, a most prominent man in American national life, whose name if mentioned would be instantly recognized, who for many years shaped the opinions and led the battles of one of the great political parties; a man who had "gone all the paces," and still was going them; who, so far as anybody seemed to know, feared neither God nor man nor devil, was in dire distress. Such family troubles as few men have to bear were his. Degenerate sons of a stalwart father were his sons. Iron worse than the iron of death had pierced his soul. He stood like a Spartan under it all. Said his friend the pastor:

"How is it that you can bear such sorrow as you do, so bravely?"

"Because, sir," answered the veteran, "I am a religious man."

And then he confided what few knew, that he was a member of a little church, far away in the State of his birth, where his mother and his father slept; and he had been a member all these years. Whatever his life had been, whatever the disobedience of sonship, however marred the heavenly visage, his philosophy was Christian; deep down he was a religious man; he also was a child of God—and knew it.

II

FALLOW-LAND

WHAT the man in the street needs, then, is not to get religion, but to develop the religion he already has. He can never be well-born until he is fully born. Much of him that has a right to be full-born remains abortive. So he never completely lives. Just as nature abhors a vacuum, so does your practical hard-headed American abhor unutilized raw material. If he is once convinced that such material exists within himself, he will become anxious to conserve, exploit, increase it.

A small party of people was swinging, at sunset, on a flat freight-car, with engine attached, through the Grand Cañon of the Arkansas. It was a gorgeous ride—no less an adjective is adequate. There was the boiling, tumbling river; there were the massed pines to the timber line; and above were the cliffs of red, yellow, and brown sandstone, illumined by the long vermilion rays of the setting sun—twenty-seven hundred feet of precipice on either side, half a mile of sheer grandeur.

While all present upon that swaying car were uttering whispered, awe-struck comments, one stolid business man from Buffalo sat silent. Some one nudged him and asked his opinion of the scene.

"I was just thinking," he observed, "what an extravagant waste of raw material!"

Whether these prosaic words were uttered to veil an inner tumult, who shall say? But apparently, at least, the man from Buffalo was thinking only of brownstone fronts, of factories and tall smokestacks, into which these wondrous cliffs might have been built. At least, he was anxious that nothing should lie around loose and unutilized. Would he not be equally distressed, if once he were shown that there were crags of grandeur in his soul that never had been lighted up for human beholder, let alone had never been built into structures for human use?

An old singer at his devotions, well-nigh in the prehistoric centuries, once called upon his soul, and all that was within him, to bless the Lord, and His holy name. It gives one a thrill to listen to him, for it is a refreshing thing, in a world of half-heartedness, to find now and then a man who calls upon all that is within him to sing the song, to do the task, to lead the life that is given him. So much of the work of

the world, and the singing of the world, is lackadaisical, half-souled, that it is a genuine joy when we meet, when we come into touch with, or when we listen to one who throws all his being into the message of his life.

Herein lies the difference between great singers and ordinary mediocre singers, that the former sing with what we call "soul," "temperament," "spirit"; and herein lies the difference between the great work of the world and the cheap, ordinary work of the world, that those who do the former cast into it all that they have of heart, of will, of spirit, and of power.

There are capabilities, there are powers, there are possibilities in all of us of which we seldom dream—capacities, depths, that we seldom reach and sound. There is much of undeveloped raw material; much of fallow ground into which plowshare never yet has struck; much of rich, deep soil; and living, springing waters, into which the drill never yet has pierced; much latent force and capability, which have never been called into play.

Even physically it is true that few of us realize of what we are capable until put to the proof. We can endure far more, accomplish far more than any of us believe until we try. Physicians tell us that we are, most of us

at least, seventy-five per cent. stronger than we think we are. Here is a lad, let us say, who weighs one hundred and twenty pounds—thin, spindling—whom any able-bodied boy in the community can throw with one hand tied behind him. But put that little fellow into the hands of the expert trainer at school or college, and there is no one in the State, perhaps the nation, who can touch him for a hundred yards, two-forty, or a mile.

Or here is a great clumsy, hulking fellow who, if he only knew it, might get the best of Mr. Fitzsimmons, Mr. Jeffries, or whoever is the latest champion. The lines of the poet might be paraphrased to read:

Full many a brute of deepest dye, I ween,
The dark, unfathom'd streets and alleys bear.
Full many a pugilist is born to spar unseen,
And waste his muscle on the country air.

Others of us might gain honor, perform services, and bear responsibilities, if only once we could find out what we are good for, and come to believe in ourselves.

Somewhere on a New England farm, or an Arizona ranche, at this hour, is a woman singing,—singing to the accompaniment of her pots and pans, singing to the delectation of one lone man in the barn lot or the sheep pasture—and it

is something to sing for the delight of one lone man! But if the woman only knew of the bird locked up in her throat, and, under guidance, could set it free, she might sing for the emotional and spiritual uplift of hundreds and even thousands. Skeptical though we be, there are mute, inglorious Miltons; there are gems of purest ray serene in the dark unfathom'd caves of ocean; there are great mental, artistic, spiritual, religious forces that lie dormant, undeveloped, dead, in many souls that need but self-consciousness to set them free, and but a little encouragement to send them vibrant and operative into the world.

The great teachers of the race realize this fact, and that is why they are the great teachers. They look upon common men and women as divine possibilities that lie sleeping, as yet unawakened; and they do not for a moment dream that they put anything into humanity—these great teachers—they simply lead out what is already within them. So Garfield was able to say that Mark Hopkins at one end of a log and a student at the other, constituted a university. That great genius, Mark Hopkins, never put any power into a student's head or heart—he simply developed what was already lying sleeping within; he so poured his own soul into the task, with a great joy he so threw

himself into the purpose, that the student could not but respond. The young lad's own inner nature was drawn out of him—"educated," as we say, in the strict etymological sense of the word.

One of the greatest modern teachers in America was the late Dr. William R. Harper. At Yale, twenty years ago, you could have heard the echoes of his teaching amongst the students who were still in the institution. They said that that great, strong, powerful, enthusiastic spirit would lift men up out of themselves, and in spite of themselves, though he had the driest subject that any man was ever called upon to teach to a company of his fellows—the Hebrew language. He would put upon the board a few of those ugly, scrawly characters, and then he would point to them, and say, "Look at those, gentlemen! Aren't they beautiful! Aren't they beautiful!" They would lean over in their seats, and they would work for him four hours out of the twenty-four, until all the other professors in the institution were jealous of the amount of time that Harper took. And he did not give those men anything—he simply educated those men—drew out of them the latent capacities and powers that were already in the humblest and slowest of them.

Thus also Jesus of Nazareth, the greatest teacher of them all, recognizing the latent capacities in men, had only to come into their presence, and with His great throbbing, magnetic soul, touch them at a remote corner or boundary line, and He could quicken them into new life; they responded to Him, in spite of themselves; and what lay dormant and unexplored within them was immediately opened up to the light.

He comes into the home of Zaccheus, and His mere presence is stimulating enough for that hard, cold, practical, greedy man of the world to cry out, "Master, from this time forth I give half my goods to feed the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted of any man, I will restore him fourfold!"

He has only to come into contact with the woman of Samaria, and speak with her for a short time, until she runs enthusiastically into the city and calls all her friends, and says: "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did! Is not this the Christ?"

He has only to hold a few moments' conversation with the polished, refined Pharisee, and he instills into Nicodemus a desire to be born again, made over, the lower vast riches of his unexplored nature expanded and brought out to the light.

The military geniuses, the great commanders, statesmen, and politicians are those who, somehow, by a subtle magic of personality, are able to draw men out of themselves to use, action, toil, and sacrifice. The Napoleons for whom men die with cheers and songs are not those who put anything into men they do not already possess, but call out of men in tangible response what those men already have within. Mark Twain, with a consummate knowledge of the human heart, makes the standard-bearer of Joan of Arc a great hulking overgrown, lubberly peasant, cowardly to a degree, afraid of the mere clash of steel on steel. But when Joan is near, that pigeon-livered peasant becomes a charging lion. He will follow her anywhere, everywhere.

The Lord's voice came to Gideon—poor little weak and cowardly Gideon, threshing out a handful of wheat behind the winepress to hide it from the Midianites—the Lord's voice came, saying, "Come forth, Gideon, thou mighty man of valor."

"There's some mistake here," said Gideon. "You can't mean me, Lord. I am the least of my house. My house is the least of my tribe. My tribe is the least of the nation. Send by some strong man's hand. Case of mistaken identity."

The Lord's voice said, "Come forth, Gideon, thou mighty man of valor."

And forth came the little craven to the conquest of his country's tyrants. It is a good name for a band of American travelling men—"The Gideons."

No man knows what a hero he is until he is called forth and tried; and it is to the high, heroic call that the common man responds when he will not respond to a less noble note. Witness the response of all the men of Europe to what they feel is the call of Country. When the call of self-interest in Socialism failed to hold men; when the call of the Church to personal, individual salvation failed to reach men; when Socialism and the Church both had crumbled and fallen, there came the high call to self-sacrifice, the call not to shorter hours and easier tasks, not to pearl gates and gold streets, but the call to the muddy trench, the long march, the blackened face and bleeding hands and feet, aye, and the call to death—and men answered to the high call, "Here!"

The great statesmen, moreover, have been those who believed in the power and capacity of common people and have dared to trust it. Washington and Lincoln are outstanding names in our history and are revered around the world because, with their ears to the

ground, they heard the heartbeat of the great common people, responded to it, vocalized it, put it into action and into statute; because they believed in the power and the capacity of the ordinary common man.

Now, the greatest desire, no doubt, of almost all men, is the fullest personal development, the utilization of all the force and all the capacity that they possess. The first question of the catechism reads, "What is the chief end of man?" The answer is, "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever." We cannot interpret that answer to mean that the chief end of man is to tell God how great He is, though that is worth while; to sing praises constantly to His name, though that also is worth while; but we must feel that this phrase, "To glorify God," means what Jesus meant when He said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples." The way in which we can best praise God and glorify Him best, is to bear most fruit, and so be the disciples of the Christ. In other words, it is our glory, and it is our best means of glorifying God, to develop all the powers and capacities that we possess until they become valuable and working in the world; to see that all the sap that is in one's nature comes outward into bud and blossom and fruit; to make

the most of one's self, and the finest of one's self; and, changing the figure, to polish and refine one's own personality, until it shines with all the glory that it was intended to shine with, when it was made to reflect the glory of the Lord, from glory unto glory.

Out in the Rocky Mountains there is a little lake the surface of which is scarcely ever fanned by passing breezes, so is it sheltered by crag and cliff and mountain top. Still as glass, it mirrors back the overhanging pine and hemlock, and the yellow and green and blue of the sandstone rocks. It seems a very shallow little lake—you can see the bottom of it at any place, you think, in the clear, crystal depths. You think you can reach down and pick up pebbles all over the basin that holds that water; but to the bottom of that little lake plummet line never yet has gone! Is that not a picture of the human soul? So deep and so profound that nobody ever yet has stirred its depths!

"But," says the man in the street, "that is not a picture of my soul. I am shallow, as that lake appeared to be. You can pick up the stones over the depths of my nature anywhere. I am not naturally religious, and I am not deep and profound. I am very ordinary and very shallow." That is the only heresy in life.

Not to believe in one's self, one's kinship to God, and one's inherent and yet unfolded and undeveloped capacities,—that is not to believe in God who made us.

“Well, if there are capacities and powers in me yet unsounded and undeveloped, I should like to know how to reach them—how to unfold them—how to expand them.”

Life does this for us. There are two means at least by which we may develop the unsounded depths of our natures, or two kinds of means. These are voluntary and involuntary. Whether we will or no, the inevitable experiences of life deepen and enrich the soil of our souls. To go up against life, which for no one is smooth and even and easy, against the hardnesses and obstinacies of life, the difficulties, the perplexities, the trials and the sufferings of life, is to expand our capacities, to toughen our sinews, to develop our souls!

And here we have at least a glimpse into the purposes of the Creator in putting so much of hardness and of suffering into the world. We cannot see His ultimate purpose, but we can at least see the immediate result. Hardness creates men and women. It makes them better, stronger, more heroic, than they ever could be without it. Once, when I was lying upon a bed of intense pain, a friend of mine came,

and standing by my side, took my hand and said, " Sometimes we do not look up until we are flat on our backs ! " I never have forgotten that word. I never could forget it. Sometimes God has to send the iron down, down, down, deep into our souls before the strata are pierced where the living waters are.

It is in the exquisite agonies of life that oft-times we slough off the mortal, material existence and look up into the sky, into the face of God, even as He scourges us, and cry out, " Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him ! " It is a brave word of Browning's :

" Then welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough ;

That bids nor sit nor stand, but Go !

Be our joys three parts pain, strive, and hold cheap the strain ;

Learn, nor account the pang ! Dare, never grudge the throe ! "

Sometimes over the sodded mound, and under the weeping willow, under the suffering and the loss against which one's soul rebels, and yet which is inevitable and irreparable, the soil of our hearts is mellowed, deepened, softened. The rain of tribulation fructifies the fig tree that otherwise might be cursed !

And then, sometimes, on the other hand, in the greatest joys, men's inherent latent powers

are called into play. Phillips Brooks is right, is he not, when he says that in our highest moments, whether of sorrow or of joy, we naturally and inevitably call upon our God. In moments of stress and grief, we cry out involuntarily, "God help me!" In moments of relief, we cry, "Thank God!" Perfectly natural is it that our souls should come up to Him in times of greatest exaltation. We have seen men humbled by great good fortune, men made hungry and thirsty for righteousness, through prosperity. To be sure, that is rare. For the most part prosperity hardens a man, or a nation—adversity softens and refines. But there are those who have found in their very good fortune, and their joy, the presence of God, and the feeling and the sense of God.

Once again, involuntarily, the latent heroism and capacity of man is oftentimes brought out by his very sinfulness. We shall have to tread carefully here, but it is undoubtedly true that many a man has been brought nearer to God by his sins, by his failures, by his attempts to realize the absurd—for, after all, that is what sin is—by his desire to do the thing that, in the nature of things, cannot be done; by his striving to get satisfaction through that which, in the nature of things, cannot and does not satisfy. You have seen a man galvan-

ized broad awake by the shock of the thing he has done, and reclaimed, made over, liberated, set free even through his own slavery.

"The bird with a broken pinion never soars so high again," was the old evangelistic song that we used to sing. If that were true, where would be our John B. Goughs? Where would be our General Booths? Where would be our Dwight L. Moodys? Where would be our St. Augustines? Our Dantes? Birds with broken pinions, every one of them. There is hope for any man, no matter what he has done, or how he has fallen; and he can fly just as high! Now, that is not saying that it is a good thing to sow wild oats. That is not saying, "Let us do sin, that grace may abound." God forbid! But it is saying that sin, itself, sometimes electrifies a man awake, and brings him to himself.

Jesus would not have put it into His parable if it had not been true. The lost son, the prodigal, says Jesus, so significantly, "when he came to himself, said, I will arise, and go unto my father." "When he came to himself!" His best self. His real self. His profoundest self. His undeveloped self. When, at last, he called upon all that was within him, then he said, "I will arise and go home to my father." The implication of the Master is here very

plain—that a man's real self is his better self. When, therefore, he is not at his best, he is not himself. He is, as we say, beside himself, as if a blow on the head, or strong liquor, or drugs, had made him temporarily some one else; as if his real inner self had been taken out of him, out of his mouth or the top of his head,—even as many people imagine the soul at death comes out of the body,—and the inner self stood beside the outer, or apparent self. Then, later, in our colloquial language we say, he “comes to.” That is, he comes to consciousness, comes to himself. So the lost son came to himself, and said, “I will go to my father.” In the same fashion, when the man in the street “comes to,” comes to himself, is “at himself,” he arises also and says, “I will go to my Father.”

But there are certain things that voluntarily we may do, and experiences that we may undergo, which will develop, refine, unfold us, increase the fruitage of the trees of our lives. First, our association, our comradeships, the character of the people with whom we have to do. Is there anybody in your acquaintance who, by his very presence, brings out the best that is within you? Anybody before whom you want to be at your best? Anybody with whom, in spite of yourself, you are at your

best; whose personality quickens mind, heart, will; tunes, intensifies? If there is such, lock him to your bosom with bands of steel. Never let him go. Follow him about, day in, day out. Take up your boarding-house across the street from him. Never let him out of your sight if you can help it. Make him your own.

“But,” says one, “I have no such friend. The nature of my environment is such, or the natural reserve of my own character is such, that I have no such friend. I cannot find him, and if I found him I could not make use of him.”

Ruskin tells us that there are certain kings and princes waiting to associate with us, all the time, if we care to come into their company. They are gathering dust upon our shelves, and yet are ready to give us the best and the finest that is in their nature—not the ordinary table-talk, or made-conversation of the day—kings and princes of the soul, waiting to speak to us! Seek them out, and avoid the lesser lights. Above all, there is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Prince of Princes, the chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely, who is ready to be a friend to every friendless man or any man. That same great Teacher and leader of men that could understand the secrets of men’s

hearts, and draw them out to their best self-expression—He is ready to stand beside every one of us, to take each one of us by the hand, and talk to us even as He talked to those two on the way to Emmaus, whose hearts burned within them by the way.

“But,” objects the common man, “that is mystical, unreal. Jesus died two thousand years ago. I don’t see how I can make a friend and a companion of Him.” Jesus Christ is alive in the world today, more really than He was two thousand years ago! Do we not know that a man can live long, long after his apparent death? Is not Washington alive, and William of Orange, and Garibaldi, and Oliver Cromwell, and a host of other great souls? Is not, then, the Son of Man and Son of God alive, increasingly alive, almightily alive in the world today? There never was nor is anybody quite so much in evidence as He! He is here, ready to associate with all sorts and conditions of men, to be a friend, to be a comrade, to be a saviour, to be a redeemer, to anybody that will meet Him half-the-way. That companionship is open to all! If we do not feel and see His presence in our world, our civilization, our ethics, our art, our literature, our commonest thoughts and aspirations, we are blind indeed! Social life and business life all take their

finest ideals and best attitudes from Him. He is not dead. He is alive.

Meditation upon Him that this busy age seems to have lost, the moments before the fire, in the deep silence of the woods or the fields, the moments when we withdraw from the touch of humanity and turn our eyes upward, consciously and voluntarily, to God—meditation which Ian Maclaren calls one of the lost arts—will deepen the soil of our souls. Be alone. You have the right to be alone. The world has no license to invade your privacy twenty-four hours out of the day. Be alone, and think upon God.

Then pray. Our age needs, as no other age has ever needed, to follow the example of the bewildered, hesitating, half-crazed Hamlet, when he said, "As for me, look you, I'll go pray." You see, here are the old, old exercises that humanity has found necessary to the expansion and development and the training of its powers. Prayer to God—unceasing prayer to God. Consciousness of His presence—not petitions to Him, but association with Him, talks with Him, on the streets, in the shops, in the stores, in the home, in the busy social circle,—that is what we need. Everywhere conscious of and talking to God, we shall deepen the soil of our souls. One of the sages

and saints of our Middle West used often to say, "I sit here under the trees, on the grass, and talk to God; while He talks to me!" He seldom said "I pray," but we knew, as everybody who really was acquainted with him knew, that it was so; that is real prayer.

"That I might develop all that is within me! That I might realize the end of man, to glorify God, and enjoy Him forever! That the unexplored, unclaimed, arid lands of my soul might be conserved and utilized, and given back to Him who made them!"

There is the instinctive thirst of humanity. And it is the thirst that can be adequately quenched in Christ, and Christ alone. Ho, every man in the street and on the road, come ye to the waters and drink!

III

SOME ONE TO COME

EVERY man must have his Messiah. In some form or other, at some time or other, every man in the cities of the world, in streets narrow and dark like the byways of Damascus or Algiers, on broad boulevards like those of Paris or Chicago, every man on the plains, pampas, or steppes, every man in the mines, factories, or fields, every white man, black man, or brown man, must have his Christ of God, a power not himself to help him. He looks for some one to come to him. In the nature of things he feels he has the right to look for such a one. The universe, blind and grinding though it be, owes him a Messiah.

Now he thinks his Messiah is come, and now he looks for another. Now he welcomes the coming one in a Buddha or a Mohammed and rests his soul upon the stalwart shoulder; and now his faith is shaken, his Messiah fails as Buddha is failing in Japan today, and the man in the street cries out for some one else to

come or he dies, ere he dies. Now it is the Christian who declares that Messiah has arrived; now it is the Jew who insists that Messiah is yet to come. But for every soul of us He is either here or coming.

No man can live his life alone, nor die his death alone. It is not good that man should live alone. Strong, stalwart souls there are who, in the pride of their independence, insist that they will stand alone.

"It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll;
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul!"

That is the strain in which they venture to front life, its storms, its pains, its deaths. But stoicism has been tried and abandoned by the human race. There is no sense among men more universal than the sense of dependence. We need a Father. We need each other. We need Messiah.

Man is a gregarious animal, and needs his fellow-man. Few men can keep their sanity in solitary confinement. Sheep herders, on our Western plains, weeks and months alone, to use the language of the West, often "go loco"—that is, lose their mental balance and even become insane. Men must reach out beyond

themselves and touch others, or they die of loneliness and fear.

The simple-hearted, kindly natured negro most clearly shows this trait. Negroes congregate in their settlements like bees about a hive. They sit up to the small hours only to talk and be together, though they know they must arise at daylight and doze over their tasks next day. I once heard a negro preacher by the baptismal pond, at Lexington, Kentucky, close a prayer—for he was considered “very powerful in prayer”—with these eloquent and profound, though simple words: “At las’, O Lord, when Thou hast served Thy righteous purposes with us here on dis earth, take us home to dat land where it is all Howdy, and no Good-bye!” . Give it a rising inflection, that last word.

Nor is it the simple-minded alone, but also the more sophisticated, who lean upon one another. Business is built upon association and trust. Men consult each other, stand together, or they fall. No man lives his business life alone, or carries his business responsibilities by himself.

Many years ago in a frontier town of the West, now become a great city, lived a hardy pioneer who was commonly called “Laughing Andy.” Yet I never heard him laugh aloud. No

doubt his sobriquet was due to the smile he always wore,—not one of these political smiles, these made-to-order smiles, these superficial smiles, but the smile that is still to be seen on the portrait in his son's home, the smile that would not come off even as he lay in his coffin. He was tall and gaunt and stoop-shouldered, like Lincoln and the race of the blazed trails. He wore a full, reddish-gray beard in his later years, and the birds would come fearlessly and, alighting on his shoulder, pluck out a hair or two with which to line their nests—a rather painful process to him, that must have been, but he would only stand and smile. Squirrels would eat from his hand; little furry things were not afraid of him; horses and cattle followed him about. There are men like that, now and then.

This “Laughing Andy”—men would come to him to settle their business disputes. Bitter enemies they would enter his store. They would find him lying full length on his counter; for he had an aphorism like this: “Never stand up when you can sit down; never sit up when you can lie down.” Lazy? No, not an ounce of laziness in his six-foot-one, two hundred and ten pounds of lean body. He would lie there, and let them tell their tale of woe and bitterness and hate; then he would look at them

out of his big gray eyes, he reminded Lincoln-like of an anecdote, talk for an hour, maybe,—for he never hurried,—over old times and far-away places; and then when spring had come and the ice grown mushy, he would gently push his boat out into the midstream of their affairs, compose their differences, adjust their claims, cheat the courts out of a case, shake hands with both, and permit each to shake hands with the other in his presence, and laugh kindly at them as they went their way, wiser, but no sadder men. He worked no miracles; he hypnotized nobody; he simply served as some one to come, in an hour of need, to his friends in the street. Every man sees the day when some one from outside must put a hand into his affairs. They are too much for him alone. Dependence is a trait of the strongest.

There was a strong soul once imprisoned. He was a man who had come from God, and his name was John. He came baptizing folk in a river; his home was the desert; his clothing, haircloth; his food, locusts and wild honey. He had dared to beard a king, and defy the illegal consort of a king. Now he was deserted by the multitude and even by most of his close friends. He languished alone in Herod's sad dungeon of Machærus. Then, to assuage the doubts and yearnings of his soul, he sent two

of his followers who yet remained beside him to ask of Jesus, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?"

To him there was no other possibility. One of the two alternatives must be true. Either Jesus was the one to come, or else another must come. He was in the case of the Japanese and many another who have lost faith in their traditional Messiah. If Buddha is not the one, if Confucius is not the one, if Jesus is not the one, then we must look for another. How is it that John has lost his faith? He is imprisoned, deserted, alone,—he that once saw so clearly. He, at the setting of the sun one day, had pointed the finger of certitude at Jesus, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" His own sun was near the setting. Soon the old eagle was to be caged; he was to beat his wings helplessly against the bars of fate and circumstance; the film was to grow over his eyes; and he was to cry aloud in his anguish: "Is it really He that should come? Was I mistaken? Must we take refuge again in the hope deferred that maketh the heart sick? Is there some one else for whom we must wait?"

Take away a man's Messiah, false or true, and he must look, wait, hope; some one must come. This is as true of a Japanese as of a

Jew, of a modern as of an ancient, of a white man as of a brown or yellow one. No matter what the outside, what the environment, what the age, the average man is the same the world over. Under the turban and the robe, under the Scotch cheviot and black evening suit, beat the same hearts, work the same brain-convolutions, well up the same yearnings and longings, desires, hopes, and fears. If our Messiah be not risen, we Christian men must look for another. There is no getting along in this chaos without one. There is, there must be, then, some one to come.

Let us look first at the conditions in Israel. The important thing about this question of John's is that it shows us so clearly the attitude of the Baptist, the spokesman of the Hebrew people. The whole of that nation had long been looking for some one to come, and now if this was not he, then they must continue to look. If the prophets had never written a word about the Messiah; if Isaiah and his wonderful fifty-third chapter had never come as a message to the downtrodden and broken and dissevered people of Israel, they would still have looked for some one to come. Every nation does in its moments of distress; and all through the thought of Israel, like a golden and scarlet thread woven into some dull

fabric, was the expectation of this coming one to restore the pristine glories of David and Solomon.

No doubt, at this very time when John came preaching in the wilderness and when later he was put behind Herod's prison bars, the fishermen of the Lake of Galilee, and the peasantry all about that beautiful inland sea, were bound together in secret compact, with arms stored, with preparations made against that day when some one should come; and who knows but that the favored leader of this peasant soldiery was he who afterwards became the rock apostle of the twelve, Simon Peter? No doubt the shepherds of the Judean plains were in like fashion sworn under a great oath with munitions prepared, waiting with eyes to the east for the dawn to arise when some one should come and grasp the sword and lead them against their hereditary foes. And who knows but that the emblem which formed their standard was the Star of Bethlehem that their fathers had seen in the east? No doubt the young sons of the princely houses of Jerusalem, in the same way, were banded together in secret understanding, while in the basements of the palaces on Zion and Moriah were the swords and the spears and the armor for the coming day. And who knows but that some

young John Mark was the chosen leader of those aristocratic regiments?

Fanciful, all this, you say,—imaginative? If you will turn to the books that were bound into your father's and your mother's Bible, that are not bound in our Bibles of today, you will find clearly pictured all of these combinations that I have been trying to rehearse. The Apocryphal and the Apocalyptic literature, dating from the century or so just preceding the coming of Christ, is shot through with this expectation, with this preparation, with this firm underlying faith of this broken and bleeding and yearning people of the hills that some one should come and save them and restore them. Furthermore, the people in the narratives of the Gospel show clearly in their conversations with Jesus and His followers this expectation. Some one must come.

It is just as natural as the rising of the sun after darkness, that people in moments of their depression should look for a deliverer, a conqueror, to come and lead them out into the light. Rome, in her decadence, when her hitherto invincible legions were beaten and broken, when her boundaries were steadily pushed in; and when, especially from the north, Goth and Hun and Vandal were bearing down upon the Eternal City itself,—Rome said,

“Just wait; Nero will come back!”—Nero of all others!—fratricide and matricide, yet nevertheless an able soldier and a great emperor,—“Nero will come back and lead the cohorts of Rome and will build the Eternal City once again upon her seven hills and guard again her world-wide roads.” They were just as confident that the empire would be saved as that the sun shone upon the Italian shores.

In our own country, in our Southland, when the armies of the Confederacy were beaten and fleeing before the armies of the North, when our farms and plantations were burned and still smoking, when the ragged regiments were losing by hundreds the flower of Southern youth, we kept saying to ourselves, “Never mind, just wait until Lee comes, wait until Jackson comes, and all will be well; some one will yet come and save the falling cause.”

The North American Indian, hemmed in upon his narrow reservations, with all the romance and the glory gone out of the happy hunting-ground, in his broken days still has his messiah dances, counting upon somebody to come to win back the fields and the rivers and the forests for him once more and to restore the old tribal glories. The heart has no escape from this longing—some one must come.

What is true nationally is also true of our

individual lives. Do you not remember that dark night when you wrestled with some problem so grave that you could not handle it alone,—do you not remember in the long hours how you said, “If only somebody would come and share this with me, and solve this for me”? Or do you remember when you tossed upon a bed of inexpressible pain, or worse yet, when some one that you loved better than your own life was turning from side to side, fevered and uneasy, and you said, “Oh, will he never come?” as you listened for the wheels upon the gravel or the jangling of the sleigh bells along the country road—“Will he never come?” We need a power not ourselves, we need a hand stronger than ours; somebody must reach out to us in the catastrophes, in the perplexities, in the defeats and disasters of life; some hand there must be, some one must come. We cannot lead our lives and fight our fights and win our battles for ourselves. Inherent is this expectation in the human soul.

Now what is the answer that Jesus sends back by these two disciples? “Go and tell John what ye have seen and heard, how that the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel

preached to them." There was proof enough for John and for his followers. There was satisfaction in these events for the people of that time. To our present age this answer must be reinterpreted; a different strain must be given, out of the words of Christ Himself, and out of the life of Christ, to this reasoning, scientific age in which we live.

Let us, then, take this question of John the Baptist and ponder its two possible alternatives, and answer, if we may, from the life and the work and the teachings of our Master, that question for this present age. For just as John asked it then, so are strong men asking it today, just as the disciples of John came eagerly to know in that time if Jesus were the one that should come or if they should look for somebody else, so today business men and merchants, working men and travelling men are asking that same question: "Is he the one? If not, then I must look for another."

Jesus said the blind see and the deaf hear. And so they do today. Jesus opens the eyes of men's minds, unstops the ears of men's souls that they may see the light, that they may grasp the truth; for these are things that men must have, light and truth. They are more important far than the light of the sun. Jesus must either bring these things, or men

must turn to another. There must be satisfaction for the mind of man in any religion that is presented to him, otherwise he will turn elsewhere and find the satisfaction that his mind must have. We are convinced, as perhaps no other age has ever been convinced, that the world is constructed upon the principles of law and order. We see evidences of Mind back of creation. We see the adaptation to natural conditions of the leaf upon the tree, of the roots that strike down into the ground. We see Mind in the fossiliferous inscriptions on the rocks; we see Mind in the coal deposits and the natural-gas deposits, in the oil, in the waters, the cataracts, the mountains of stone; a great Mind has been working in the construction of the world. And the mind of man, made in the image of that great Mind, thirsts after contact with Him and can never be content unless it is in some way in touch with the Infinite. Man's mind, allied to the Infinite Mind, has the right to truth. It must have the truth, and it perishes without the truth. Messiah must first of all bring it the truth.

Knowledge is one of the things for which humanity thirsts, and he who is to represent humanity must come with knowledge in his hand, or else humanity must look somewhere else. Man wants to know. He will pay more

for knowledge than he will for any other commodity upon the market. Man will, without hesitation, face frozen death at the North Pole. Why? To bring back sperm oil, pelts, ivory? No. But to make a map of the district, to know whether it is a frozen field of ice or an open sea,—just to know that he has reached the Pole,—just to know. In like manner, man will face the flaming sword of African fever-smitten districts, crossing marshes, ascending rivers to their sources, exploring jungles, breathing malaria, miasma, and typhoid; and will sell his life upon the banks of great inland lakes. Why? In order that he may open up for commerce? No. Commerce will follow upon his footsteps, true; but not for that primarily. In order that he may make a map, in order that he may trace the rivers upon it and diagram the lakes and the seas; in order that he may bring back specimens of the flora and the fauna,—just that he may know. So, too, man goes down in his diving-bell, letting down the fishhooks of his interrogation, and bringing up the secrets of the dark, unfathomed caves of ocean. Why? For pearls? For sponges? For riches? They follow in his train, but primarily just that he may know; that he may see what that little black thing is that wriggles through the water, may grasp

it and save it and stamp it for ever and a day upon the books of human knowledge. So men pore over the secrets of dusty tomes, volume after volume, under the midnight oil, growing thin and wan, pale and parchment-hued. Why? That they may write books? Become famous? Lecture and grow rich? No, a thousand times no. But that their minds, which crave the food of the infinite, may know. Knowledge is not the most valuable thing in the world, but it is one of the most valuable; and the Messiah must satisfy these cravings of the mind of man.

Now, does Jesus? If He does not, I must turn elsewhere to find somebody that will satisfy me. I must go to Socrates; I must go to Epictetus; I must go to Mohammed; I must go to Buddha; I must find a mind that can content this restless mind of mine. I have a right to ask of the Messiah that He satisfy me. Does He? Jesus spake as man never spake, with a calm certainty and confidence; grappled with the riddles of existence, tore them apart, opened them up, spread them out, and solved them for the minds of men. Who has told me of my God except Jesus who said, "Our Father who art in Heaven"? Who has told me of my fellow-man and how I am related to him except Jesus who said, "You are brothers

one to another, neighbors all; love your neighbors"? Who has told me of my destiny when I have shuffled off this mortal coil, when this poor decayed flesh has gone back to dust whence it came? Who has told me except Jesus: "Because I live ye shall live also. Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God believe also in me"? I hear no other voice; I listen intently, but from the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word, save only the word of Christ who brought life and immortality to light in His gospel. He satisfies me. He teaches me that I am a reasoning and reasonable being. He treats me as if I were such, appeals to me as if I were such, satisfies me because I am such. He is prophet to the mind of man.

But we see more than mind in this world. There is evidence of heart in nature just as there is of mind. Scientists tell us that nothing is still in all the universe; that every molecule, every atom, is in constant vibration and never at rest. This solid desk, the cornerstone of this building, is not static; but every particle is in constant quivering motion, throbbing and beating, answering to the great heart that is back of all. The tides rise and fall. The little waves wash and pass. The leaves upon the trees are not still; but vibrate, throb, beat

back and forth, in answer to the zephyrs that flow from the heart of the Eternal.

Now, we all realize that that is a sort of poetry mingled with science, and yet it is not altogether fanciful. In man himself there is evidence of heart, of emotion; and that desire for contact with the Eternal heart that beats back of the world, is one inextinguishable desire of the human soul. The heart that is back of all must beat in unison with my heart. There is a kinship between Him and me; and the hidden or lost tie must be found in the one who would come to satisfy and supply the souls of men. Does Jesus answer here?

The profoundest desire of the human heart is for satisfaction from its sense of guilt, which is the oldest consciousness of all humanity. From the Garden of Eden, or from the cave where the cave men dwelt, just as you prefer, down to the present day, the universal consciousness is the consciousness of sin, of fall, of frailty, of failure to live up to one's own expectations and ideals. Does Jesus answer here? How man has striven to solve the problem of his guilt! What does Jesus say to him? He comes to that paralytic beside the waters of Bethesda, to the man who was paying the penalty of his own sin, and says to him, "Thy sins be forgiven thee; arise, take up thy

bed and walk." He says to the poor woman in the temple, "Has no man condemned thee?" "No man, Lord." "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."

It is so that the Messiah must speak:—"Thy sins be forgiven thee." Did Socrates ever speak so? Did Seneca ever talk so? Did Mohammed, did Buddha? Is there any other voice that has rung through the world, "Thy sins be forgiven thee"? That is the way our Master must speak to us, else we must look for another. We hear no other voice saying to the dead in trespasses and sins, saying to the leprous in shame and crime, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." He has solved the problem. He is the priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, mysterious, profound, incomprehensible; and since Jesus came, we need no other priest to do our praying for us. We need no other priest to stand between God and us to get our absolution for us. Through Him we do our own praying, boldly yet humbly, at the throne of grace. Through Him we get our own absolution, our own forgiveness directly from the throne of God. He is not only the prophet, then, for the mind, the teacher who is to lead us aright; but He is the priest to satisfy the emotion, the heart, the soul.

Once again, He said, most wonderful of all,

“The poor have the gospel preached unto them.” There is a proof of His Messiahship. Here was one who took into consideration all sorts and conditions of men. Here was one who talked to the intellectual Greeks, to the rich Pharisees and publicans like Nicodemus and Zaccheus; and here was one who considered the poor, the Arab in his filth, the Bedouin in his black tent upon the desert, the toiler behind the little crooked stick of a plow, the dweller in the mud hut of the hills of Syria,—all have the gospel preached to them. So we find the universal Lordship of a King who considers all His subjects and reigns in the hearts and minds of all kinds of people, who satisfies not only the intellectual and the emotional, but the volitional life of men and women, who governs as a King of Kindliness.

The wills of men no less than the minds and hearts must be satisfied. We say in this Western world, in our republic, that every man is a king, that we have no king, that none rules over us but ourselves. But all the time we are bowing our wills to kingly men. All the time we are subjecting our volitional life to outside influences and dictation. If it were not so, our republic in all its freedom and with all its possibilities, would be crushed and broken into a thousand atoms. Wills must be con-

trolled. Yonder belted and helmeted man with the mace, that stands at the corner of your Broadway, or of your State Street, or of your Tremont Street, is perhaps no stronger, even physically, than hundreds of men who pass that way every day; yet there must be a guiding will in that maelstrom of traffic, there must be a man of authority to say to this car come, and it comes, and to this one pause, and it stops. Why is it that the seats in an auditorium are all turned in one direction? It is not because the man who stands there as chairman or speaker is any better or more able, even intellectually, than hundreds of others who are in the great convention hall; but it is because every assembly must be guided and controlled; there must be a will to which voluntarily the wills of other men yield, otherwise there can be no order. In like fashion, every great company of men and women, whether it is mob or nation, is ready to subject its will to any one who arises and says, "Follow me; I can lead you; I will lead you." How quickly a mob flows after a strong man, goes wherever he directs it; how quickly it is silenced and stopped by one man who dares stand up and say, "I know what should be done; follow me"!

James A. Garfield spoke but a single word

to the mob of surging thousands in New York the night of Lincoln's assassination, and they went back pacified to their homes. He said, "God reigns and the government at Washington still lives." Henry Ward Beecher stood before the packed and hostile audiences of England listening calmly to their jeers and cat-calls and uproar, facing even their missiles, and their firearms, calm and unafraid, waiting for his moment of mastery which always came. The strong man holds the mob in his palm.

The man who can, the man who is able, is the king of men, crowned or uncrowned. He is the canning one, in the German phrase, the *Koenig*, the King. Here comes this man, Jesus of Nazareth, this peasant who stands amongst the mob of Jerusalem, of the world, wild and ungovernable as they are, and says to them: "Adopt this system of laws? Write these statutes on your books? Organize this army"? Not at all. He says, "Follow me." This is His great message to the world. "Follow me. I am able; I can lead you; I can save you."

"Thou seem'st human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, Thou;
Our wills are ours, we know not how,
Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

He has reigned and increasingly reigned ever since, even to this day.

Thus He answers the cry of the soul of man in all its needs and capacities. He answers as prophet to the mind; He answers as priest to the heart; He answers as king to the will,—prophet, priest, and king.

“All hail the power of Jesus’ name,
Let angels prostrate fall,
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him, crown Him, crown Him Lord
of all.”

We need not look elsewhere. We call the roll of all the heroes and the sages and the saints and the priests among the sons of earth, and there is no answer from any of them to the cry of our souls except the answer that Jesus gives to mind and heart and will. “Seek for your master,” said Phillips Brooks; “never be content until you find Him who, by His wisdom, power, and love, has the right to rule over you, and then give yourself to Him completely.”

A man was on trial for his life; the verdict had not yet been rendered; it was early in the gray dawn after a night of storm and stress; the prisoner stood there at the convergence of the power of two great nations, deserted and alone, with no attorney to stand in his behalf.

His face—you can almost see it now—was ashy pale; wan and emaciated his figure; drops of blood trickled upon his brow where they had mocked him with a crown of thorns; lashes were evident upon his back where they had laid upon him the scourge of ignominy; but never was human figure more dignified, more superb than when he stood before the concentrated power of Rome and of Israel. Pilate was awed as he looked upon him, and Pilate, the practical, the bullet-headed, the iron-handed, said to him: “A king? They say that Thou art a king?”

The Master made answer: “Thou sayest it. I am a king; for this cause came I into the world, to bear witness to the truth. But my kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight. I am a king.” So He was and so He is, every inch a king, the king of the souls of men.

IV

THE *CHARMING* RABBI

IN order to be still better assured whether the Master of Nazareth answers the needs of the Common Man, it may be worth while to estimate Him in the three aspects already outlined, of Teacher, Priest, and Prince.

We must all of us learn from teachers. From the time when we lisped our first lessons at our mothers' knees, through the primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities, even out into the ways of business, on the farms, in the mines, forests, or homes, we are shortsighted indeed, if we do not tread in the paths marked out for us by those who have gone before. Even if we should dare to explore our own independent way, without guidance or help, experience herself comes in at the last as the sternest and most inexorable of pedagogues.

Measured, then, by the tests we ordinarily make for teachers, how does the Nazarene fare? If we should systematize these tests, in all probability they would be about like this:

Has the Teacher a message? Has He knowledge of the human mind? Can He make the subtle contact between the two, the message and the mind?

It were folly to follow a teacher who knew nothing to teach; the blind leading the blind. But many teachers know a great deal, without having ability to impart what they know. They lack insight, it may be, into the mind of the learner; they are unable to take his point of view; and so they cannot help him in that process which students of the mind call apperception—the passage from the known to the unknown. Further yet, there are conceivably those who know much, and in this knowledge include knowledge of humanity, who yet, from lack of a delicate unknown quantity which we call personality, magnetism, are unable to connect up the two nodes, that of the message and the mind.

By this triple test, Jesus records the highest possible registration. He had a message; He knew men; He knew the methods of presentation. The trefoil of the teacher's power, the open sesame to the soul were in His easy possession:—knowledge of a message, men, and methods. Methods is rather too mechanical a term by which to express this wonderful, intangible, spiritual way of approach to the

inner recesses of the soul; but it is a word in common use among teachers, in whose language for a moment we are trying to think.

He knew men, and needed not that any should tell Him what was in man. He looked into the faces of fishermen, and, more adroitly than Satan, sifted them as wheat. He ate and drank with publicans and men of the world, and they became His fast friends. He talked with women who had histories, saw the play and interplay of motive, read the seared, sobbing, dried-up hearts, and redeemed them. He drew to him, by His knowledge of them, His charm for them, His love for them, men of high attainments as well as laboring-men. Side by side at His manger-cradle knelt shepherds and wise men; side by side in His audiences and in His following, went men of high condition and of low. When He began His teaching, He beautifully chose to go first to fishermen, shepherds, tillers of the soil; but Nicodemus, and certain Greeks, and who knows but the great Gamaliel himself, came to Him.

He knew the methods of approach by which to gain entrance at all doors. Was it a polished Pharisee who came to engage Him in debate? He wasted no time on rudiments, on alphabets, on mint, anise, or cummin. He

looked the man between the eyes and said, "You must be born again." He began on a high plane and conducted the whole interview there. Was it a poor drab by the well-curb of Samaria? He quickly silenced her bantering tongue and routed her crude wiles with a thrust into the suppuration of her life. Was it a group of uncandid opponents who came to impale Him on the horns of their dilemma? He turned the dilemma into an antithesis, an epigram, that will stick in the minds of men while time lasts: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

Now, however, let us turn to the message. Let us ask the old question, "What think ye of Christ, His word?" Perhaps our first answer may aptly come from some of the men in the street who heard Him. A set of officers from the temple guard, minions of the chief priest, were sent one time to arrest Him. They came back, thumbs in mouths and answered, "Never man so spake!"

A strange answer for commissioned officers, sent forth to arrest a malefactor. If the chief of police of a modern city, or the sheriff of a county, should swear in a posse of deputies and send them out to arrest some criminal, and those deputies should come back and say,

"No man ever talked like this man; we never heard any man speak like this man," we should all agree that it was a strange answer for commissioned officers of the law sent out to arrest a man.

No doubt these men had followed Jesus about for several days, listening to His words, trying to take Him in His talk, to find ground upon which to witness against Him. You can see them now as, on the outskirts of the crowd, their dark, Oriental eyes overhung by their dark, Oriental brows, they listen half listlessly to what Jesus is saying. Suddenly some such utterance as this strikes their ear: "I am the bread of life." "I am the water of life." "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Their brows lift, their eyes open, they listen more intently; unconsciously they edge their way in through the crowd; until by and by, in the very front rank of His hearers, with eyes wide open, and ears wide open, and mouths wide open, they are hanging upon His utterances. Then the crowd breaks up. These men mechanically betake themselves back to the palace of the high priest, having forgotten their errand; and when at last they are con-

fronted with the stern question, "Why have ye not brought Him?", they had not thought what answer to make, and they just blurt out the first word that comes to mind, "Never man spake like this man. We never heard anybody talk like this man." A strange answer, indeed, from commissioned officers sent out to arrest a blasphemer.

But strange as this answer is, it is the same that ever has been made by all who, in the history of the world since the time of Jesus, have gone forth to arrest the progress of the Christ. Many a man in the strength of his mighty mind has said: "I will stop Him; I will arrest Him; I will put an end to this delusion of Christianity; give me time. When my book is written, when my system is complete, when my word is spoken, and my work is done, then no longer will men listen to this Jesus." But after the work has been accomplished, after the book is written and the word spoken, these men, all of them without exception, have come back saying, "Never man spake like this man."

There was Strauss in Germany who wrote his *Leben Jesu*, the Life of Jesus, to prove that the Master was a myth, an idea, an ideal, beautiful but legendary,—Strauss closes his volume with a tribute of the highest respect to the very conception of such a life as that of Christ.

When he yields the idea, he yields all; for the man capable of the idea, the ideal of a life like that of Jesus, must have been the Christ Himself; no other could have conceived it. In France, Renan, with his *Vie de Jésus*, his Life of Jesus, beautiful, poetical, paying high tribute to the æsthetic attractiveness of the great teacher, the "Charming Rabbi," closes his volume with these words: "Whatever miracle the future may bring forth, Jesus of Nazareth will never be surpassed." And John Stuart Mill, in England,—with much the same attitude as these other two,—has somewhere declared that humanity has made no mistake in lighting upon Jesus of Nazareth as the acme of mankind. Those are great men speaking,—men whose minds command respect and whose work has been epoch-making in the world. Each one of them comes back with the same answer as these officers, "Never man spake like this man." Whatever else they may say, this is the universal verdict of truly great men who have examined the life of Jesus.

A yet more modern voice comes, and Rudolph Eucken, writing in the last few years upon the subject "Can We Still Be Christians?" declares that it is a startling fact that the scholarly minds, the great minds amongst men in all Christian history, striving to get

along on other than Christian ground, have almost without exception been compelled to acknowledge that they cannot succeed; we cannot live without Jesus, once having known Him.

Now, what was there about the teaching of Jesus that it thus lays hold upon the minds of men, so that when once they have heard it they never can forget it? What is there about His words that, like grappling hooks, fasten in the mind and never can be shaken out? It is not that He was a great literary artist, though He was. It is not ornamentation and decoration of speech, for there was with Him no striving after effect, no "sewing on of purple-patches," no "painting in of cypress-trees," in His canvas. He was a plain, blunt man that simply spoke right on; in words of wondrous beauty, to be sure, whose literary and poetical value has rarely been equalled, and never surpassed, by any great teacher of ethical truth; but the secret lies not in literary charm.

Neither was it any striving after originality, after the new and the strange and the unusual. In this age of ours the man must have a very unusual message if he is to catch the public ear. Something original that nobody else has ever spoken, something Bernard Shawesque, is necessary to catch the attention and reach

the ears of men. We will not read this morning's paper ; we must have this evening's paper ; and not the three-o'clock edition, nor the four-o'clock edition, nor the five-o'clock edition, but the extra hot from the press and still damp with the printer's ink. And the novels that we read, they must be fearfully and wonderfully made if they do not pall upon the taste of this *blasé* age. We need not think we have a monopoly of the desire for the new, the strange, the unusual. When Jesus came, there were men who gathered together for nothing else but to hear or tell some new and strange thing. Now, Jesus does not pander to this taste for the abnormal and the new. He does not hesitate to take old truths and recoin them and use them over again for the good of men. He does not hesitate to borrow from the Prophets, from Moses, from the Pentateuch. Confucius, they say, spoke the Golden Rule five centuries before Jesus uttered it. Confucius said, "Do not unto others what ye would not that others should do unto you." Jesus turned it about and made it positive and said, "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you." You say there is no difference between the two ;—one is simply negative and the other positive. Yes, but that is all the difference in the world ;—the differ-

ence between the negative Orient under its banyan tree and within its age-old walls, and the positive, active Occident,—the difference between the East and the West. So with Jesus, truth, wherever He finds it, and whenever He finds it, becomes grist for His mill, becomes ore for His mint. He takes it and stamps it with His own inimitable coinage and sends it out current legal tender in the world.

So it is the truth and the character of the truth that He uttered; it is the fact that He spake as man never spake before and has never spoken since; it is this that makes Him all-powerful in the minds of men, so that whether they will or no, whenever they come into the presence of His teaching they bow and must bow; they cannot forget; they cannot let go of it.

It would be manifestly impossible in the few short pages at our command to make anything like an adequate résumé of the teaching of Jesus; so varied is it, so widely applicable to the life of men. It is like a many-peaked mountain range. But it is possible to glance over the great snow-crowned summits of the group, even as it is possible to look over the Alps and see the Jungfrau, the Matterhorn, and Mont Blanc. At a moment's glance two or three of the most valuable of His utterances

capture attention, which have become an everlasting and inestimable heritage of mankind.

Let us select three of these, three that have to do with the relations existing among the only three beings that we know anything about in the world: God, myself, and my fellow-man.

I know that God is. There have been, of course, those who have denied His existence, but they are few. The great multitude of men and women from the beginning of man's conscious life have known that God is. Only the fool hath said in his heart there is no God. The great philosophers and teachers, scholars of all human history, have recognized the existence of God; and it is idle to try to prove that God is. You do not need to prove what men already believe.

Then I know that I am. There are some philosophers who have tried to teach us that we could not be certain of our own individual existence. But you never can convince a man that he himself is not an entity. Descartes it is, the father of modern philosophy, who bases his whole system on the assertion, "I think, I doubt, therefore I am."

Then I am conscious of the existence of my neighbor. There have been philosophers and whole nations, at times, who have tried to

convince the world that we could not be certain of anything outside of ourselves; that the world was a delusion. But you cannot convince me that my neighbor does not exist. I think, therefore I am; and I communicate my thought to him and he grasps it and gives me his thought back from himself; so he thinks, therefore he is. So then, those three beings exist: God, myself, and my neighbor.

The relations existing among them, that is the all-important thing to us. And what are those relations existing between God and myself, between myself and my neighbor, and between man and God? Those are the questions which strike to the very root of man's life. And the answer to those questions is the answer for which man has been craving through all the millenniums of his existence.

When Jesus came He found men perplexed with regard to the relation of God and man. They knew that there was a God, but they did not know what kin He was to them. They looked out upon the world of nature and the world of history, the only inspired book to which most of them had access, and they saw two kinds of gods, or God, in the world: good gods and evil gods, beneficent gods and destructive gods. In the spring of the year, they saw the trees and shrubs and fields bring-

ing forth bud and blossom and ultimately fruit, to bless and feed the world; and they said, "Here is a good God, a kindly God that brings these gifts to men." Then they saw the mildew, or the blight, or the storm, or the untimely frost cut down and blast and blacken that leafage and that fruitage; and they said, "Here is an evil, a destroying god in the world." And they could not understand. They looked out over the sea, that beautiful Mediterranean that was the ocean of the time, and they saw it smooth and wind-swept, bearing the ships on to their desired haven with their riches, blessing and benefiting mankind; and they said, "Here are the footsteps of the good God." Then they saw that same sea tossing mountain high, dashing ships to the bottom, and they said, "Here is an evil, a destroying god, that is working against that good and kindly god"; and they were perplexed. They saw the mountains, bringing forth gold and silver and precious stones, to adorn and to enrich humanity; then they saw those same mountains belching forth fire and smoke and lava and burying whole cities. They said, "Here is a warfare going on between a beneficent or good God and a destructive or evil god." Job cries, "When I look before me, I cannot find Him, and when I look behind, I do

not perceive Him." The psalmist who wrote that ninetieth Psalm, standing as close to God as undoubtedly the singer of such a song did stand, cries out in a pathetic perplexity in the two strains woven together :

"Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God;"—the good, the kindly, the beneficent God.—"Thou turnest man to destruction;"—there is the evil god.—"And sayest (to another generation), Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night;"—the good God, the giver of life.—"Thou carriest them away as with a flood;"—the evil god that destroys.—"They are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up;"—the good, the creative God—"In the evening, it is cut down, and withereth, for we are consumed by Thine anger and by Thy wrath are we troubled;"—the destroyer. The Singer was seeking in the darkness, if haply he might find Him, and yet not understanding Him; it was a tragedy, to know that God was and yet not to know what kin He was to man.

Now, what does Jesus say? "Our Father Who art in heaven;" "I go unto my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God;" "Our Father Who art in heaven." Never man spake like that;—such calm certitude. The Hindu yonder in the jungles, years before, had sung about Deus Pater, the Father God. The Greek poet had written of Zeus Pater, the Father God, the same name. The Romans had talked of Jupiter, the Father God, the same name;—and yet of what unspeakable crimes did they make this so-called Father of men guilty! They had no conception of a Father in heaven, who was a real father to the race. It remained for Jesus Christ of Nazareth to teach us, so that we can never forget it to this hour, the true kinship of God to man. To-day, the little child by his bed, or by his mother's knee, and the strong man battling with the waves of life, alike say, "Our Father Who art in heaven." The words are household words now, and on occasion are in everybody's mouth.

But, after all, how many of us have grasped firmly and profoundly the love of God as a Father of man? A gentleman who had two beautiful little children once said to me: "When these children were very young, I would not dare stand on the ground and reach

up my hands to them at the second story window of my home with an invitation to them to come. They would leap right down to me, in an instant." That is fatherhood. That is the loving trust that a child feels for a normal, sincere, and loving father. We speak of the love of motherhood and the beauty of it, and it is the most beautiful thing in the world; but there is something to be said for a father's love as well; a willingness to give and be given, to spend and be spent for the sake of the offspring, a willingness to stand at the threshold, if need be, and die in the guardianship of them. That is what fatherhood means. Do you suppose if we believed, you and I, profoundly in the fatherhood of God, that there would be any one of us staying away from Him in the brightness and the glory and the blessing of this relationship? Nothing on earth could keep us from Him, if once we grasped the deep significance of this message of Jesus Christ's.

Again, when Jesus came He found men perplexed with regard to the relation existing between man and his fellow-man. He found that in that day, to be a Roman was greater than to be king; but to be anything else than a Roman was to be a foreigner, an enemy. The names of the two were synonymous in

Latin, and in many another language besides. He found that to be a Greek was to be one of the cultivated, one of the refined, one of the teachers, leaders of men; to be anything else than a Greek was to be a barbarian, bearded and savage. He found that to be a Jew was to be one of God's own chosen people; but to be anything else than a Jew was to be a gentile, with an accent and a sneer upon the first syllable. So it was every nation for itself and the devil take the hindmost;—just as it is today. It was each nation armed cap-a-pie against every other nation and Ishmaels all—just as it is today.

Now, what did Jesus say? He said a certain man went down to Jericho, and fell among thieves that beat him and stripped him and left him by the roadside half dead. Then there came by a priest and there came by a Levite, men sworn under their solemn oaths to be of service and benefit to every Israelite with whom they came into touch. These men, seeing their bloody fellow-countryman lying in the road, gathered their skirts about them, for they were on their way to the temple to worship, and if they had soiled themselves with blood they would have been ceremonially unclean and, forsooth, unable to enter into the church of God and offer worship to the Almighty Father.

There is many a man of that sort in America today. Then there passed a Samaritan. And if there was anybody that a Jew hated with all his soul it was a Samaritan; and if there was anybody a Samaritan loathed from the bottom of his heart it was a Jew. Yet this man it is, of all others, who gets down off his beast and binds up the wounds of the unfortunate, pouring in oil and wine, and takes him to the inn and pays his reckoning for many days. "Which of them," says Jesus, "is related to the man that fell among thieves?" They said—they were forced to say—"I suppose it was he that showed mercy upon him." They could not use the word Samaritan. Then said Jesus: "Go ye and do likewise. You are neighbors all; you are brothers all." There are no boundary lines between peoples and kindreds and tongues and tribes; there are no narrow friths that cause nations to abhor each other, in the teachings of Jesus Christ; for the brotherhood of man is universal in its scope. That is the message concerning the relationship of myself to my fellow-man.

Do we believe that? Two thousand years after it was spoken, ask Europe if it believes. Ask Germany and Austria, England, France, and Russia; ask Belgium if it believes. "Well," comes the reply, "we believe it in

America, anyhow." Winston Churchill said if we believed it, it would be nitroglycerine in modern society; it would blow the whole fabric to pieces and change it and turn it upside down. Brotherhood! We have but little conception of brotherhood. We get together in our churches and it is Brother This and Brother That, but if we address a member of a neighboring denomination, not of our own particular little section of the great church of Christ, it is Mr. This and Mrs. That. See how small is the comprehension of Jesus' great idea!

We go into our lodges, we clasp hands and give the grip, and it is Brother This and Brother That. But we go outside into the market-places and on the stock exchanges and it is Greek meets Greek, diamond cut diamond; we overreach each other in a horse trade or lumber deal, or perhaps one would better say a motor transaction or a lumber deal. At least such is the case in the lodge to which I belong. How about yours?

There is no topic upon which a preacher can declaim, quite so popular, as the brotherhood of man. People come up and shake his hand with varied comment:—"That was fine. My sentiments exactly. You were in fine form today. I believe every word. Excellent sermon." Then they go back to their unbrotherly

practices on the morrow. How long, O God, how long!

Do you suppose if we believed in the brotherhood of man, that there would be any armies facing each other across the French boundary line? Do you suppose if we believed in the brotherhood of man, there would be any necessity of our nation's increasing its armament this year of grace?

Do you suppose if we believed in the brotherhood of man there would be any little ragged newsboys sleeping, this winter, in the old ash barrels and rusty boilers and over the gratings of the printing-press engines for a little warmth? You say that is an overdrawn picture, there are no boys in such condition in the United States? You can see them any mid-winter night on the Bowery and Broadway, on Tremont Street, State Street, Locust Street, in any of our great cities,—little fellows with skin showing through their torn pants, almost barefoot, selling their belated news, while the snow comes down, at eleven and twelve o'clock at night. There would be no such thing as a newspaper boy in all America if we believed in the brotherhood of man;—unemployed men would be selling the news as they do on the other side of the water; and the boys, every one of them, would be in school under a com-

pulsory education act that compels,—if we believed in the brotherhood of man.

Do you suppose, if we believed in the brotherhood of man, that there would be any sweatshops in our great cities under the management of Christian business men—any great mills that served as prison-houses and slave-grounds for little children? Do you suppose there would be hundreds of employees ground under the heel of greed and piracy,—if we believed in the brotherhood of man?

Do you suppose that, if we believed in the brotherhood of man, there would be an army of tramps moving back and forth with the seasons up and down the continent, infesting the right-of-ways and farms, and making the lives of farmers' wives miserable? Ah, but you say, "He who will not work, shall not eat." Yes, the old economic law, as old as the laws of the Medes and the Persians and older, will not change. But certain it is that every man who wanted to work would have a fair and square chance to work, which certainly is not the case today,—if we believed in the brotherhood of man. But again comes the objection: "These things are governed by economic conditions. You cannot idealize laws of supply and demand. Your dreamers of brotherhood, like Tolstoi, never get anywhere

with their dreams." Let us believe enough in Jesus' great doctrine, and we shall get somewhere fast enough, in regard to supply and demand, opportunities to work, healthful conditions under which to work, limitations of women's and children's hours of labor, employers' liability, and even in regard to so huge a task as internationalism. Be assured of this, we shall never accomplish these Herculean reforms without the aid of Jesus, who set forth the law that lies at the base of them.

Do you suppose, if we thoroughly believed in the brotherhood of man, there would be any dark corner of any dark continent unenlightened by the message of the gospel of Jesus this good year of His grace, twenty centuries after the glad news was uttered? If we believed in the brotherhood of man we could not go fast enough to tell it to the uttermost parts of the earth. If we believed in the brotherhood of man, would there be any churchless parts of our cities, while the churches move out into the wealthy and the fashionable and the comfortable sections? If we believed it—but it is too great for us! It will take us another nineteen centuries, perhaps, to achieve it, to enter into the A B C's of this great doctrine, to enter into the vestibule of the greatest thing in the world, which is love.

Once more, when Jesus came He found men perplexed with regard to the tie that should bind them back again to God. He found them troubled with the world-old consciousness of their separation from their God. Instinctively they felt, somehow, that they ought to be in touch with Him, that they ought to be at one with Him, but they felt between Him and them a veil hanging, the veil of sin. They saw between Him and them a great yawning gulf, the gulf of sin. And this consciousness of separation between Him and them was the keenest consciousness that they had.

What did Jesus say to them? Said He: "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. If ye had known me ye should have known my Father also." Never man spake like this man. Other men had said, not "I am the way back to God"; but they had said, "If you will listen to me, if you will follow my teachings, if you will walk with me in the porches or the groves, if you will adopt my system, if you will learn my philosophy, after twenty, thirty, or forty years of study, I think perhaps I can show you the way of life." But here is a man who did not say, "I will teach you, listen to my words," but who said: "Follow me. I am

the Way and the Truth and the Life." No man ever so spake.

No doubt there is in every city, certainly in the country round about it, an old homestead that was a little quieter last night than it ought to have been; there is a vacant chair in front of the fireplace, and a vacant chair at the table; there is a room upstairs quiet, echoing to no footfalls, unoccupied through the night; there is, in that room, no doubt, an old walnut bedstead, an old marble-topped washstand and dresser; there is the counterpane, kept smooth and clean and uncrumpled by a mother's tender hands. Downstairs in front of that fireplace, last night, was an old father whose heart was empty, yearning, void, and breaking; while out yonder across the Father of Waters, across the prairies, on the ranch, in the lumber camp, in the great city, was a young boy who said: "I will not go back home. My father does not love me any more; and I do not love him any more; and I will not go back home." If only somebody could go to that boy with the truth, could say to him, "Your old father does love you; your father's heart is breaking for you; come back home; I will be the way home for you to your father's house." Now, what is that but the story of the lost, or prodigal son, the message of our Master? Nobody else ever

talked like that; nobody ever struck that chord in human nature; and it has wended its way to the hearts of men more than any story that ever was told. Why? Because it is so true to the universal experiences of men. Because we know that you and I are that lost son out on the desert, in the purlieus and slums of the city, refusing to go back home.

There is the word of life—to whom else can we go? Here is the message of Jesus, who solved for us the problems of existence and completed the great triangle of relations, the links of the endless chain;—the Fatherhood of God to man, the brotherhood of man to his fellow-man, and Himself the atoning power that leads us back home again to the Father's house.

V

THE UPWARD SLANT OF THE SOUL

IT is aspiration that saves men. The priestly function of Jesus lies in His power both to create and satisfy longings. He is spoken of as a priest after a mysterious order. The mystery lies in the fact that He has not to do with stole and mitre, with swinging censer, clouded incense, burning candle, shimmering drapery and lights, tolling bells or forms and symbols of any kind; but He has to do with the untraceable labyrinths of the inner life. It is not in outward æstheticism, however compelling, that He presides as priest. There is no beauty of this sort that we should desire Him. But it is far beneath all visible architectural or ceremonial effects, in the elemental, ethereal, mystery-laden atmosphere, where the wind breatheth where it listeth, that He stands to minister.

We used to hear much of "Justification by Faith." Martin Luther set a continent free with the power of that great phrase. Now it has, to the ears of most women and men, an

academic, a theological, altogether a rather metallic sound. But justification by faith is a very much simpler thing than, at first blush, it seems. In St. Paul's mind, who was the father of the phrase, it simply means that God takes the will for the deed. We are accounted righteous when we are not righteous, just because we look up to God, wishing that we were righteous. We are children who did not mean to do wrong, but meant to do right. We love our Father and we trust Him, so we come to Him in loving trust saying: "Father, when I do wrong, I do not mean to do it. I do not want to be bad. I want to be good." Then the Father does just as a father would be expected to do. He forgives and He takes the aspiration for the fulfilment, the will for the deed. That is justification by faith.

He is a priest, then, who inspires aspiration, directs aspiration, and satisfies aspiration. He presides at the bed of new birth, by the cradle of the soul, and listens to the first cry of desire to live. Furthermore, changing to another of His figures, that is the highest priest, who pierces deepest into human hearts, finds the imprisoned springs of desire for life, breaks up the rocky strata, sets free the pure water, brings it to the top, and sends it out into proper

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channels. He it is who finds for us our own fountains of living water, springing up within us unto everlasting life.

Humanity needs not fewer desires but more desires and right desires. A social worker among the submerged seeks not only to satisfy wants but to create them. Herein lies the salvation of the discouraged, slothful, contented pauper. So the priest comes to the dead in trespasses and sins, the opium-smoker of content, and shakes him by the shoulder, raises him from his death, saves him to his life. Jesus possesses this priestly, this atoning power. He paid for it a great price; He paid for it His life.

This power of the priest is too precious a thing to be easily bought. No man can have it by inheritance, by favor, or by money purchase. It is obtained only by the shedding of blood. In proportion as one gives himself, in that proportion only shall he get it. Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. The priest must shed his blood, break his heart, die on his cross, be lifted up, before he draw men upward along the slanting path of the soul. In that Jesus thus gave Himself as no other before Him or since ever gave himself, lies His patent to the High-priesthood, His mysterious majesty in the vast

nave of the inner life, His atonement for the sins of the world.

Men have long since become impatient with academic attempts of schoolmen to solve the mystery of the atonement of Jesus Christ and to put it into hard-and-fast definition. To the man in the street, the idea that God substituted Christ for man and visited punishment upon the head of innocence, in place of guilt, is revolting, shocking, abhorrent. It offends the sense of justice. No less does the suggestion that God paid Jesus as a ransom to the devil, a sop to Cerberus, offend the modern man's sense of commercial ethics. He must first be convinced that there is a devil, outside himself. Nor again does the notion of a scapegoat made of Christ for the sake of vindicating the dignity of an outraged law—outraged by man and not by Christ—fit in with his ideas of legal equity. You cannot content him with such statements. He will either listen to you in doubting silence, or like Gallio will shut his ears and, caring for none of these things, go off quietly to indifferent sleep in the midst of your harangue.

But if the man of the world today is told that the atonement is a glowing mystery, too deep for human fathoming, let alone for human defining; that it seems to run like a beautiful

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blood-red warp through the fabric of all law, natural, human, and divine; that Jesus, so far from being an exception, was the most perfect exemplification of this wonderfully difficult and intricate law; your average man will sit up and listen, and possibly begin an intellectual upward slant that in eternity may reach its goal. Perhaps his cogitation on Atonement may lead him along like this:

All life and all progress in the world is at the expense of sacrifice and death on the part of some one or many. Mere physical existence can only be begun and maintained as the result of a rapid, repeated, widespread death. Not only we, but all creatures rise on stepping-stones of others' dead selves to higher things. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, in giving birth to the next day and the next generation, and the next era. To put it even on the lowest plane, it is not merely certain rudimentary forms of life that make their culminating act the act of reproduction, and with this climax of their careers pass off the stage of the living forever; but even the highest type of life—man—in giving life to his kind that are to follow him, in nurturing them, guarding them, rearing them, voluntarily embraces decay and death, if gradual, yet no less sure.

This sacrifice of life that other life may follow—higher, better life or else the universe is all out of gear—is partly involuntary and partly voluntary. The struggle for life has its foil in the struggle for the life of others. The pouring out of blood for the sustenance of the beasts that prey has its opposite motive in the pouring out of their hearts' rich tide by the mothers of the race that prays. The awful war of extermination that rages in the thick jungles of the tiniest grass blades as well as in the greatest forests and mountain fastnesses claims not more victims than the altars of voluntary vicarious sacrifice upon which the parents of all men and many creatures willingly and gladly lay down their lives.

The same principle applies, does it not, in matters higher than mere physical existence? There is no advancement in human thought, no growth of any great telling movement among men except at a cost of life. Advance comes by friction, opposition, battle; and these waste life. The scholar burns out his life with his midnight oil. The preacher—if he be really a preacher—dies just so much upon the cross, every time he ascends his pulpit. The statesman—if he be one, and not a mere politician—gives his life for great ideas just as really through his toil as the soldier in his

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marches and his battles. The man of affairs, that deserts may be watered and conquered, roads built, the earth peopled and prospered, gives his life whatever the motive, either in midnight journeys, or meetings, or wastes it in the confinement of an office that is like a cell. The world of thought grows, develops, but at what a tremendous cost of human life!

In the same fashion, may it be, is it not true, that in the world of spirit growth comes only in the train of death? That souls may be uplifted, cleansed, exalted, redeemed, some one or many must die. Indeed, we have seen many die in the ages past for just this purpose. A moral vicarious sacrifice needs little illustration besides our own memories of a short but heroic history. So far we can understand. But is it not possible that just at this point enters the larger sacrifice which we cannot understand—a mysterious sacrifice, a death demanded in the very nature of things spiritual, that higher life, eternal life, sin-free life might be the portion of the race? The necessity for such a sacrifice is no more mysterious, no more awful, than the necessity for the wholesale slaughter and the multitudinous self-immolation that is going on every hour in the world.

No doubt the next solution of this problem

is to be somewhere along this line. But is the solution reached when the analogy of Christ's life and work to that of other great martyrs is traced? We all believe in these days, and perhaps it is safe to say, that Christ died to save man from man, not man from God—social redemption; that Christ died to save man from self, not man from Satan—individual redemption; that Christ died to save man from sin, not man from hell—immediate redemption; but is it safe to say that the age is to be content with the statement that He died, or for that matter, lived, for these ends, only as Huss, Savonarola, Socrates, or Daniel lived and died for man's redemption?

No, there is something greater here, and more mysterious; greater as the degree of difference between Him and them amounted to a difference in kind; more mysterious as the express revelation of God in Him, the hatred of immaculate purity for sin, the suffering of untainted goodness in an atmosphere of taint and stain, all are more or less mysterious to the contaminated vision of sinful men.

Jesus, in His sacrifice, must meet the craving of the heart of man after his God. Men had always felt that somehow, of right, they belonged to God; they were akin to Him, and knew it. But between Him and them they

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were conscious of a veil hanging, the veil of their own weaving, the veil of sin. Between Him and them they saw a great gulf fixed, the gulf of their own digging, the gulf of sin. How to rend that veil, to bridge that gulf, was the one great problem—and still is—to all mankind. The consciousness of sin is the one universal consciousness; and the question of its cure is the one everlasting question in the world.

Striving to answer that question, men had sacrificed lamb after lamb, bullock after bullock, hecatomb after hecatomb, till their temples had run red with blood, and yet, like Lady Macbeth,—crying, “Out damned spot,”—they had never been able to wash out the foul stain upon their hands. They had a consciousness of their God and their God’s hatred of sin, and yet, though they had erected priesthoods to intercede with Him, they had never been able to arrive certainly at a sense of forgiveness, which was, and perhaps still is, the end and aim of all religious service. For one thing, they were uncertain as to the character of their God, and His attitude toward rebellious children.

Such being the state of affairs, God, seeing it, felt the need of a solution for man of this tragic question, and as a means to this end, of

a full revelation to man of His own heart—its hatred toward and horror of sin, its love for and pity toward man. So, when the fulness of time had come, when man had reached such maturity as would comprehend, in some measure, His self-revelation, the incarnation followed. God chose to reveal His qualities not in a book, not in the words of prophets and teachers, not in a system of theological statements, not in the works of nature. He had already shadowily revealed Himself in all these ways; and to individual minds, here and there, these revelations had been intelligible. But to the great multitude of men there is but one book legible and comprehensible, and that is man. Everybody could read a man's life, everybody could read a man's face—so interesting, so fascinating is man to humanity. Hence, when God would send His final message to humanity, He must write in this final and universal language of mankind—a man. He did so. He said to the world: "This man is Myself. What He is I am. He does always the things that please Me. He and I are one. He that hath seen Him hath seen Me."

Having thus revealed Himself fully to men, He proceeded to show through this human medium His attitude toward sin. Never in all the world has there been such rebuke of sin as

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in the mere presence of Jesus Christ upon the earth. Not the broken tables of the law, not the fiery serpents in the wilderness, not the deluge, nor the ashes of Gomorrah, have ever carried the conviction of God's unalterable and inappeasable hostility to guilt as has the quiet, gentle, calm dignity of Jesus' sinlessness. The word of God is here heard most convincingly, not in the earthquake, not in the fire and tempest, but in the still, small voice of the incarnate God. His presence, like that of the Holy Spirit, nay, which is identical with that of the Holy Spirit, convicts the world of sin and judgment.

And yet, along with this message of hatred toward sin, comes the major strain, the dominant theme, in the symphony of Jesus' life, of God's overflowing, inextinguishable love for man—the sinner. Individuals heard the strain—oh, so clearly—the rich young ruler, the woman of Samaria, Zaccheus the publican, Simon Peter, the poor drab in the Temple—these and scores besides heard the new note, the song of love and forgiveness, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." Here was no consuming fire of wrath, here was no freezing ice of impenetrable sinlessness, lofty, stark, aloof. Here was gentleness, long-suffering, mercy, love. This was the heart of

God. Individuals caught the message, the nation caught it, and slowly the nations catch it, too.

But this goodness, this tenderness, this sinlessness, this embodied mercy, must suffer in the presence of sinfulness. The very word long-suffering shows that we have felt some inkling of the pains of God. We have suffered, too, have we not, in some feeble attempts at a purely moral redemption. We have wrestled in soul with an erring brother in the bonds of sin, with a wilful and headstrong child, with a criminal wretch struggling to be free of the shackles of long habit. We, now and then, have made vicarious atonement, at least in its elements, so far as the simple moral motive extends. But we are not God. We did not make man. We are not responsible for his well-being, his on-going, in short his redemption. We, therefore, cannot understand the full agony of creative grief at the moral maladjustment of the creature.

"We do not know, we cannot tell,
The pains he had to bear."

If we suffer in the throes of a rebirth for some friend, parishioner, or relative, struggling loose from a wicked past, what must have been the agonies of Gethsemane, and of the hours upon the cross?

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Let us not imply that this symapthetic moral passion is all there was to the Atonement. It is about all we can understand, it may be; but mystery is a legitimate part of religion; and because we cannot understand more than this is no reason why we should affirm that there is no more. Indeed, we cannot understand why there should be pain and passion in mere physical birth, in intellectual birth, in moral birth. Why, then, is it a thing incredible that we cannot analyze, systematize, theologize plainly, mathematically, dogmatically, this mysterious process of redemption?

The time has gone by, has it not, when theologians presume God to scan, when they employ with smug certitude the phrases, "scheme of redemption," "plan of salvation," and the like. We have come to feel that the scheme, if there is one, is too stellar in its scope; the plan, if there is one, is too nearly like the Pleiades in proportions for us to outline with a geometrical exactness, in the size of a printed page.

That "God hath His mysteries of grace, ways that we cannot tell," we firmly believe. That He has thus dealt, in the profundity of His wisdom, with the problem of sin, we have no doubt. That somehow the sufferings of Christ were necessary to accomplish His gi-

gantic purpose is altogether in line with the best scientific thought of today. That those sufferings fulfilled something more than the purpose of erecting a beautiful moral ideal of self-forgetfulness, heroism, courage, renunciation, is the conviction of this present age and of the best thought of the age just coming on. What that purpose was we can, no doubt, do little more than hint; but that hint, in harmony with the ascent of man, finds its analogue in the struggle for the life of others which is one of the leading themes in the natural science, social science, political science of the time.

Poets sometimes reach truer conclusions than philosophers, as hearts sometimes are more nearly infallible than heads; and it is a modern American, the editor of one of our leading magazines, who sings:

“Subtlest thought shall fail and learning falter,
Churches change, forms perish, systems go;
But our deep human needs they will not alter;
Christ no after age shall e'er outgrow.
Yea, amen, O changeless one, thou only
Art life's guide and spiritual goal,
Thou the light across the dark vale only,
Thou the eternal haven of the soul.”

So then, it is by the magnetic person of Jesus, together with His atoning love and sacrifice, that man is instigated to aspiration which is the hope of his salvation. The divine

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thing about man is that he looks up. This differentiates him from the brute. So far as our observation can extend, the creatures all look downward. Perhaps some foolish dog occasionally may toss his muzzle up to bay the moon, but for the most part he noses about among the gutters and the rabbit-hutches. Occasionally an eagle may stare at the sun, but generally his gaze is turned downward after his prey. It is only man that stands upright, his "face turned from the clod," looks the sky in the face, looks up to the hills whence cometh his help. It seems to be only man that is capable of aspiration.

The holiest voices that come to him, moreover, are the voices that bid him look up, aspire, be not content with aught he has done or that he is. The voice of the breeze that rustles in the spring silences of the wide prairie, the voice of the north wind that howls about his home in winter, the still small voice of conscience, the great chorus of voices in earth, air, sea, and sky, or in the heavy hum of men, from the voice of the babe or the brook that babbles to the great thunderous voice that comes from between the Cherubim,—all bid him look up, aspire, be divinely discontent.

For what one honestly and earnestly aspires to be, that in some sense he is. Our real selves,

thank God, are our better selves. It is St. Paul himself, author of the doctrine of justification by faith, or salvation by aspiration, who reaches the high conclusion that when he falls, "it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me." So far from this idea being a license to him, for continuous sinning, mitigated by fatuous aspiring, it becomes the means of throwing out sin, taking in God, working out his own salvation, for "it is God which worketh in us." His desire for God it is which saves him at the last, God in Jesus Christ.

Suppose one does fail of his aspirations? Suppose hell is paved with good resolutions broken? Says rough old Carlyle, "Up with the fragments, ye sluggards, and break the devil's head with them." It is better to have resolved and broken than never to have resolved at all. And it is better to resolve anew than to sink down into discouragement and shiftless moral sloth. Get up and look up.

So it is a mistake, is it not, to identify religion with moral achievement, as so many liberals and ethical culturists of our day have done? Religion is not education in ethical principles, not education of any kind. True religion does not necessarily advance with intellectual training. "By intellect alone shall no man storm heaven; only the great in heart

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can do this, the passion-driven and the world-weary." Smug righteousness, or righteousness that is not smug, is not synonymous with religion. The rebellious and well-nigh untamable will may go hand in hand with a profoundly loving heart. Your lad hardest to manage may be the one who loves home, father, mother, friends, better than the exemplary son. Esau is often a greater heart than Jacob.

Here is where cold, lineally exact, ethical culture has failed to lay hold on the man in the street. He is conscious of imperfection, of crooked lines and marred surfaces in his life and conduct. He struggles, loves, aspires; but also falls, misses the mark, goes under. He wants a religion of aspiration, of hope for the imperfect, of warmth and love, of nutriment for the hungry and thirsty after righteousness. Sometimes, with all his blemishes, the man of the world so-called—man in the street, is preferable—is more profoundly religious, loving God better, than the ethically exact. To teach him that God does not love him and want him unless and until he is good, is to teach the wayward lad that his Mother's heart has grown cold, to pull down his universe about his ears, to send him hopeless out into the wreck of worlds and farther from his Father's home.

Let us guard, again, this idea of salvation by

aspiration from the charge that it in anywise compromises with or condones wrongdoing. We are not to continue in sin that grace may abound. But it does insist that there is hope for the imperfect, there is patience with the weak, there is understanding of the frailties of men, there is recognition of the desire to be good and persevering determination on the part of the Father-Mother God to love the erring son back to the home of the soul.

Jesus once said: "The light of the body is the eye. If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." It is a pathetically beautiful thing that the passage had fascination for George Mattheson, the blind preacher of Edinborough, author of the hymn, "O love that wilt not let me go." Concerning it, he makes this comment: "Our Lord says that when a man looks at the sunshine it is not only his eye that is affected, his whole body is influenced by the light. His pulse is quickened, his blood is accelerated, his step is lightened, his arm is strengthened, his voice is vivified. Even so Christ says that in the moral world everything depends on what a man looks at—his ideal. He says that the great question is, 'What is that picture of heroism which you have set before your inward eye?' He exclaims, in effect: 'It is no use to lay down

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rules of morality. What is your model of perfection, your ideal of beauty, your standard of excellence?—everything depends on that.’ ”

Jesus the great high priest, who trains men in the upward vision, here means not that one should have only a single eye, but that his eyes should be single in his vision; not that one should have but a single idea, but that one should have a single ideal; not that one should be possessed of one only thought, but that one should have only one dominating and all-controlling thought and purpose. “The world needs not narrow men, but broad men sharpened to a point.”

The Master was here talking to a nation of a strangely double vision. The Hebrews had a wonderful genius for religion, but at the same time an eye to the main chance. Jesus said to them, “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” They were attempting to look up with one eye and down with the other. Their vision was consequently blurred. It was as if the optic nerve were injured, as if a blow had been delivered on the head, as if strong liquor had made the eyes work at cross purposes and not in unison. No man, then or now, could make a dominant purpose of God and money at the same time. One or the other must be chief. One or the other must be subservient.

No man can make God and anything else at the same time his dominant aim, aspiration, vision. Our God is a jealous God, not because He wants or needs aught for Himself; but because of the optic laws of the soul. He is jealous for us to look up where He is, Our Father; for that is health to the eye, salvation to the soul.

What one tends to look upon, that he tends to become, for the light of the whole life is the eye. Watch what a man gazes upon most intently, and you can tell what is in the man. Take him into an art museum, and the paintings or the statues upon which his eye first falls and longest lingers will be index to the life within him. Take him into crowds of men and women and observe whither his eye wanders and where it fixes, and you will know something of the character of light that is in him. Take him into Old World cities and countries by hovel and palace, river and canal, sphinx and sarcophagus, crowded thoroughfare and mountain road, and by watching the bent of his eye you may know the chief interest of the man.

There never was a truer story than Hawthorne's tale of the Great Stone Face. What the little lad saw in the craggy countenance, the idealization projected upon the retina of

his soul, that by degrees and through the years the lad, grown to man, became. Devoted husbands and wives, through the passage of time, and looking upon the same things, grow to look alike. The pictures in the fireplace stamp themselves in duplicate upon their characters. So, the person of Jesus, through long years of contemplation, passes into the form of the beholder, and we are transformed into His image from glory unto glory. "Go and look thou upon the face of Christ," was the best possible comment of one medieval painter upon the Saviour's portrait done by another. Go and look thou on the face of Christ, is the friendliest criticism that one man can make on another's life.

Nor is the priestly ministry of Jesus limited, nor His atonement completed, in a beautiful ethical ideal for men to follow and even to become. It is more than that. There was and is about Him a spiritual galvanism, as inexplicable as electricity, which crackles and snaps and burns in the life it touches. He had only to say to the fishermen, "Follow me," and they forsook nets and boats, homes and kindred, to follow in His train. He had only to sit for a brief time at the table of a publican, and Zaccheus, that hard, rich, grasping man of the world, kindled into new life, saying: "Master,

from this time forth, I give half my goods to feed the poor, and if I have wrongfully exacted of any man, I restore him fourfold." No wonder the Master answered to this newborn aspiration, "This day has salvation come to this house." He had but to hold a few moments of night-talk with the Pharisee, and Nicodemus desires to be born again, and for aught we know he may have been. He has but to speak a few sentences to the woman at the well, who dared not come when other women came at evening to carry water home, and she is renewed, convicted, pardoned, transformed, as she rushes into the city in the eyes of all beholders, crying: "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?"

It is not needful, moreover, to go so far away in distance or in time, to find those whom contact with Him has made clean and whole and strong and fine. "Thy sins be forgiven thee," is as powerful a word from His lips as it ever was, and many hear it and are glad and are delivered. Many Gideons upon the railways of our West, many John Marks in our colleges and universities, many laymen who stand humbly keeping doors in His house and for His sake, many women bearing the dreary drudgeries of office and kitchen and home, millions

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have been given heart of hope, strength of hand and limb, sight of eye by the mysterious Priest.

Goethe once cried out: "My soul has feelers and not eyes! O that I could get eyes and look!" And as he lay a-dying, with his waning breath, he whispered, "*Mehr licht! Mehr licht!*"—More light! More light! Whether the casement had grown a glimmering square because of the film of death, or whether it was the windows of the soul he wanted open, we shall never know. But it is all one. Body and soul alike cry out for light. Light we must have—the Light of the world, or we perish.

A dozen years ago or so, there was, on a bit of a branch railway, leading from the mountains to the bluegrass of Kentucky, a blind fiddler who played for the pennies of the passengers. Everybody accustomed to travel on that little "jerk-water" train knew Tom, his red beard, his old cracked violin, his older tunes. A skilful surgeon of Lexington one day said to Tom:

"If you are willing to try it, I think there is a bare chance I could give you the sight of one eye. I will pay all your hospital expenses and do your operation, if you care to have it done."

Tom, who had never seen his native mountains nor the rolling bluegrass, who had never

seen his wife and children, eagerly agreed to take the chance. He was placed on the operating-table, in a broad blaze of sunlight, his sightless eyes oscillating from side to side. The surgeon with his lancet moved his hand from side to side, in time with the moving eye, then suddenly made a horizontal incision; then, the difficult oscillation of hand again, and another swift vertical incision; the four flaps thus made were deftly turned back, and an obstruction, a lens, a filament, a growth—no layman can adequately describe—was snapped out. Tom cried aloud and quickly closed the eye.

“Open that eye!” with an oath, gruffly shouted the surgeon. “Open it, I say! Open it!” Tom opened it; and instantly the healing balm with its cotton sponge was put in place and bandaged.

“Forgive me, Tom,” said the good doctor, “I had to speak gruffly; I had to make you open that eye.”

“All right, Doc; but what was that hot drop you put in my eye? It burned like fire.”

“No hot drop at all, Tom. That was the light.”

“My God!” said Tom. “My God! have I seen the light?”

Two weeks in a darkened room, and one

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morning the surgeon stood by while the nurse removed the bandages. The first object Tom saw was the nurse's face bending above him.

"Beautiful!" he murmured. "Wonderful! What is that?"

"Put up your hand and see, Tom," said the doctor.

"Oh," said Tom, abashed, "that's my nurse."

He would then sit for hours studying the objects in his room.

"What is that? looks heavy, and has four pieces running down and two running up," he would murmur; then reaching out his hand "to see," he would exclaim, "Oh, that's a chair!" He would sit by the window looking out at his new world. "What is that moving up the street? Mighty big." Then, hearing the rumble, "Oh, that's a wagon."

He could hardly wait the allotted time to go home. Then he wrote from his mountain cabin, by the hand of one of his children, saying:

"I was awful glad to see my family for the first time. My wife is not as pretty as my nurse. I can see that. But she's wonderful pretty to me. She's been mine for so long. And my children may not be as good-looking

as some; but I never seen any on the way up here I'd trade off for 'ary one of them."

Today, Tom, who learned rapidly, is book-keeper for one of the large mining companies in the mountains, happy as a king.

To one man who, like Tom, has opened his eyes upon the physical world, there are thousands who, under the loving skill and care of the great Physician and High Priest, have opened the eyes of the soul to behold the unspeakable.

VI

THE KINGDOM WITH UNSEEN BOUNDARIES

THE cry "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" was as startling to Jerusalem as "The Revolution is here!" was to Paris in 1793. The Hebrew people were as ready to unsheath swords, pull up paving-stones, and build barricades in behalf of the new Kingdom, as the French were in behalf of liberty, equality, and fraternity. It was no new word, this word "Kingdom of Heaven." It had long been on the lips of peasant and prophet, herdsmen and statesmen, fishermen and rabbis. It was electric with preparation, dynamic with memories, charged with desperation, longing, hope deferred.

Jesus adopted it and adapted it to His purposes. There could be no happier choice of words. To be sure, He meant something far different from what the Jews had meant by it; He put into it a totally different content from what it had long held; both its denotation and connotation, in His hands, were so vitally

changed that one would scarcely recognize it as the same old phrase. But the vital energy that it so long held He carried over and diverted to a larger and finer end. With them the words meant a restoration of the throne of David and of Solomon on Zion; with Him, they meant a restoration of the dominance of God in the soul. With them the phrase stood for material wealth, power, conquering armies, onyx palaces, place and pelf and preferment; with Him, it stood for spiritual riches, inward strength, peace toward self and man and God, in cottage and palace both, and the preferment of ministration.

They say the men of the Western world cannot understand the phrase as He used it, any more than the Jew of His time. Your Occidental democrat is an uncrowned king himself, and is not fond of regal terminology. This may well be; but when one grasps the significance that Jesus puts into the phrase; when one understands that the king is a Father, the Viceroy His son, every subject His child, the people, in the language of Professor Royce, all bound together in a "Beloved Community," the politics love, the chief industry service, the wealth human brotherhood, he begins then to appreciate the fact that this is all intelligible both to the subjects of the Oriental despots,

and to the citizens of Occidental republics. Anybody can understand a Father, even though he be a king.

Undoubtedly many men do still misunderstand the phrase and the Master's meaning. Even as then, when He had to rebuke His closest followers for their material conceptions, so He does today. Once when passing through Samaria, the inhabitants of a little village refused Him entrance because He was to them a heretic. Then two of His disciples, James and John, the Boanerges, sons of thunder, exclaimed, "Master, wilt Thou that we call down fire from on high and burn up these people?" The Master answered, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of." In like manner do men still do violence to His conceptions. "The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by force." Some of those who apparently stand closest to His person most clearly are those who abuse His meaning.

To identify the Kingdom with any visible organization, institutional religion itself, the Church; to give it boundaries, ponderable weight, numerable population, measurable wealth and power; to speak of members of the Kingdom, coming into the Kingdom, with reference to visible relations with any visible body;—all this is to do violence to the King-

dom of God in Jesus' conception. These violent ideas, moreover, are always material, always negative, and lead always to despair.

Mark Twain tells of an old negro in the canebrakes of the South who, for the first time and without knowing what it was, saw a Mississippi River steamboat plowing up the turgid tide of the river. When the old man beheld the rolling smoke, the flying sparks, the mighty fuss and fume, and heard the ponderous chow-chow and the earth-shaking hoarse siren, he thought this was the Almighty or the adversary, and plunging deeper into the brake, fell upon his knees, crying:

"Lord 'a' mercy on dis old niggah! De Kingdom am a-comin'!"

There are some men of intelligence just as material in their notions of the Kingdom, just as naïve, just as childlike as was this old uncle. When they see sparks and hear a big noise, when they behold crowds assembled and fireworks let off, when they possess great buildings, great treasures, wide "influence," mighty "movements," they cry out, "The Kingdom is advancing!" Possibly it is; quite as possibly it is not.

Jesus said, "You cannot say Lo here and Lo there, for the Kingdom is among you." It has no visible boundary lines. No man can

mark it out, measure its size and progress, count its members. Its lines are waving, curving lines, cutting out many whom we think to be in, and cutting in many whom we think to be out. It is among us, unseen, known only by its powerful, wonderful effects upon men and the world; it is within us, as well, and part of each one of us belongs to the bright kingdom and part to the outer darkness.

How futile, then, are the attempts of men to deal negatively with the kingdom; to stand at the doors of it—the non-existent doors—and welcome men in, or shut men out. Once the grandees of the Jewish Church stood at the portals of the temple, and halting the heir apparent, said to Him, “By what authority come you hither, do you these things?” The answer was swift and withering, “Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you will neither enter into the Kingdom of God nor will you permit those who are entering, to enter in!” And little grandees of the church still stand, flourishing some petty man-made creedal test, some flaming sword of dogma before the gates of what they think to be the Kingdom, seeking vainly to shut men out, or put men out, from the all-embracing, atmospheric Love of God.

It is many years since two young men were

walking under the stars one night at Harvard. One was in the Divinity School and one in the Law School. The former asked the latter if he was a member of any church, and, receiving a negative answer, asked why.

"Because," said the law student, "I have some doubts about the immortality of the soul."

His companion did not argue the matter, or attempt to demonstrate the undemonstrable; but pressed upon the young man that the important question was not this, but "What do you think of Christ?" The law student paid his tribute of reverence, affection, even devotion to the master of men. "That, then, is enough," responded his friend; "you are not far from the Kingdom of God."

They separated at the end of the session. The lawyer went to his home in the far South, and took honorable place at the bar of his native city. Years passed, and desultory letters between the two. Finally the one friend wrote the other the same old question, "Are you yet a member of any church?" Substantially, this was the answer:

"I applied, on returning home, for admission to my ancestral church. The ecclesiastic asked me: 'Do you believe in God the Father, almighty maker of heaven and earth?' Yes,

‘And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Saviour?’ Yes. ‘In the Holy Spirit of God?’ Yes. ‘Do you believe in this, in that, in the other?’ Yes. ‘Do you believe in the immortality of the soul?’ I—do—not—know! Then said the ecclesiastic of that ancestral church, ‘You cannot enter here.’ ”

God in Heaven! And the puny man thought he was shutting that young attorney out of the Kingdom of Heaven! He thought that little church of his identical with the Kingdom! No ecclesiastic in earth or hell has the power to keep the loving heart from the heart of God. The immortality of the soul is a vital doctrine; it is a corollary of belief in God and Christ. Some day the doubt will be swept away, when the lawyer lays a mother, wife, or child under the sod. Meantime any man who is honestly in the Kingdom will do all in his power to sweep that man and his doubts with him into the waiting arms of his Father. Bless God, you cannot shut men out, nor put men out of the Kingdom without frontiers!

Such material and negative conceptions lead inevitably to despair. The Kingdom cannot compete in outward magnificence with the great kingdoms of this world. It has no treasures like the mighty treasuries of insurance societies, of railway and steamship companies,

of steelworks, or the mints of nations. It has, at least on this continent, no buildings comparable to the marble palaces of the vast industries of men. The employees of this Kingdom often look upon these great structures round about them, and comparing them with their own little inelegancies and poverties, are tempted to quit their present service and seek another employer. They must get closer to the King and the heart of His Kingdom if they would see that when all these other buildings and treasuries are cinders and ashes and dust, the Kingdom will still be here; that others come and go, but of His Kingdom there shall be no end.

Of course the logical thing for one whose notions are material and negative is to seek another employer. Or, if he remains in the service of his present King, feeling all the time that the Kingdom is coterminous with his church or any church or all churches, that it can be bounded on east, west, north or south, that its success is measured by wealth, numbers, power, then there are but two logical courses open to him. He must either take the sword, try to persuade his fellows to do the like, and, organizing into regiments and army corps, go out like Mahomet and conquer men into the Kingdom; or else, sitting down upon

his ashheap with no potsherd of comfort, in his despair, curse God and die.

But thank God His Kingdom is not negative, nor material, but positive and spiritual; and leads not to despair, but to undying hope. If you would know in what the positive character of this Spiritual Kingdom consists, you must look upon the King of it when, on a certain day, little children were brought to Him, and His cabinet, His council forbade them. The Prince took one of the little two-year-olds upon His knee, and others in His arms, and said, "Suffer them to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom." We have lost the meaning of this much misquoted text, because, with our Western perversity and literalism, we have made it the storm centre of a doctrinal controversy. What a surprise for us now, as for those men then, lies in the words: The twelve men about Him thought that they, themselves, formed the nucleus of the coming Kingdom. They were to be chancellors of the exchequer, ministers of state, to sit on His right and left. Of course it takes men, strong men, self-assertive men to make a Kingdom. While we today, religious leaders, preachers, teachers, workers, officers, trustees and deacons, we think we are the Kingdom. Of course we are! It takes men of prominence and power, of

light and leading, to make a Kingdom. Jesus said: "No. Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom." What is it about a child that makes him fit for the beloved community?

Docility is the first characteristic of a child. He is open-minded, inquiring, anxious to learn, tireless in asking questions. Manhood, however, tends to crystallize, fossilize, at forty. It is only by conscious effort that we can keep the mind open, ready for new truth, after we reach the halfway inn. Some few there are who always grow. Hail to such evergreen minds!

Simplicity marks the child. Only the great in earth and heaven are simple. The rest are all convolutions and folds of affectation and ostentation. The great music, great art, great literature, great inventions are so simple that when we look upon them, we say, "Why did nobody ever think of that before?"

The child is sincere. There is no mingling of whitish wax in the clear honey of his transparency. It takes souls fit for the Kingdom to be thus pure. Jesus said the pure are blessed, for they shall see God. All the rest of us are courteously insincere, lying, hypocritical. Our love itself is not without dissimulation.

The child is poor. Until he is spoiled by doting parents with presents of toys and skates and bicycles and bonbons and foolish clothes, he is as happy with a rattle or a few shards or pebbles as with gold or gems. His life is independent of the things that he possesses. He does not know the yoke of property and conventionality. He is poor in spirit, and rich in life. Jesus says those who are like him in this respect are blessed, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

The child is loving. He radiates love and craves love. You cannot love your little one too much nor tell him too often that you love him very dearly. The most pathetic thing Martin Luther ever uttered was the statement that his father and mother were too busy and too preoccupied ever to lavish upon him a word of love or a caress,—Luther, with his great human, yearning, loving nature. The other day the press dispatches told of a little girl whose clothing caught fire at the open grate. Her father extinguished the flames, but not until the little thing was so burned that she died thirty days later.

“Why did you not call me sooner?” cried the agonized father, when he had put out the fire.

“I didn’t want mamma to know I had

burned my dress. Don't tell mamma I burned my dress."

All through her long illness the little thing kept saying, "Mamma, don't scold me."

Here was a child's pure love, vitiated by grown people's injections of fear. A horse which jerks his head, when you approach him, has been spoiled by some rough hand that does not know and love the dumb brutes. Of course, Jesus was right when He said that children, unspoiled, unafraid, natural, loving, are the stuff out of which the Kingdom of God is made.

With these principles firmly in mind, all justified by the words of Jesus, let us turn our attention now to the visible church, the representative, at least, of the Kingdom upon earth, by which the Kingdom is so often, rightly or wrongly, judged by the man in the street. What justice is there in his criticisms of it? Can we profit by them? Can we bring him closer to it and into more sympathy with it and understanding of it?

As we approach this topic, let us first prepare our minds by reading a few of the words that St. Paul has to say about the institution which he had so much to do with shaping:

"Christ also loved His church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify it, hav-

ing cleansed it by the washing of water with the Word, that He might present the church to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, and that it should be holy and without blemish.—*Eph.* v: 25.

The Church of Jesus Christ was an outgrowth of both the synagogue system of the Jew and the popular meeting of the Greek. In point of fact, three elements poured themselves into the formation of the early Church—the Hebrew genius for religion, the Greek democracy and public spirit, and the Roman sense of order and of law. Jesus did not found a church, dictate an organization, mark out a plan; neither, for that matter, did the apostles. It would be impossible to trace in the Scriptures a definite prescribed formula by which a church could be organized. That is clearly seen in the fact that churches built upon totally different lines all claim to find their specifications in this book. Indeed, there was no Church at large in the apostolic age, however much we may contend for it in some of our public alterations. We cannot say that the organization of any church with its board of deacons, or its board of vestrymen, or its board of trustees, or its board of elders, or its bishops, is provided for in the Scriptures.

The Church is a man-made institution.

There is no "thus saith the Lord," by which the Church, as it has developed through the centuries and up to this present hour, can be defined. The world knows this fact, and knowing it, does not hesitate to assail the Church, to criticize it, to find fault with it, to pick flaws in it, to animadvert upon it. All this is helpful to the Church. Criticism, even bitter criticism, is sometimes a saving salt. Anything that is beyond criticism must be divine and not human, and even the divine is open to estimation and appreciation.

The world does not with hostility criticize the founder of our faith. You do not hear men speaking against Jesus of Nazareth. The most violent critics of the Church, go where you will in the outskirts of society, where it is not respectable to belong to the Church, or to have anything to do with the Church, in the Socialists' hall, in the labor temples or even amongst the denizens of the backwoods or slums, amongst the navvies that toil upon your railways or the longshoremen on your wharves, and you will hear not a single word spoken against the Nazarene. But you will hear the Church torn to pieces. It is well, once in a while, for the Church to face its critics, to hear their word, to weigh it, to take it home and digest it, and if possible profit by it.

Let us, then, attempt to present the indictment against the Church; next enter a plea in behalf of the Church and then show how the Church could, if it cared to, defend itself, and then if possible carry the war into the enemy's country.

First of all, what are the criticisms currently offered against the Church? Let us be just as candid and frank as we know how to be, just as comprehensive in stating these criticisms as we can.

It is claimed that the Church is divided. So it is. There is no one great church. The Catholic Church has its two branches, the Greek and the Roman; and the feeling is bitter between the two. Protestantism, created in the sixteenth century as an offshoot and protest against the Roman church, is also divided, and the longer its course is running the more it is becoming divided. So that when the message of the gospel is carried into a foreign land today, the heathen has the right of choosing to become any one of twelve or thirteen different kinds of Methodist, eleven or twelve different kinds of Baptist or Presbyterian, a half-dozen different kinds of another religious denomination, and so on indefinitely; so that the poor heathen is perplexed, among one hundred and fifty diverse religious

bodies, to know where to find a resting-place for the sole of his foot.

Nor need we go so far away from home to find the difficulties and the disasters that beset the divided church. In a little town of five or six hundred inhabitants, you will find four or five spires pointing into the sky. You will find a little congregation of twenty-five or thirty in each one of those little churches, and each congregation pulling and hauling against the other, by name denouncing one another, having a non-resident preacher once a month, or once in two weeks at the best, leading a most precarious existence, when there are scarcely enough people in the village to support one good strong Christian church. And the world looks upon this and says, "This is bad business, it is not sensible, it is not what you would expect of children of a loving God who love each other." Consequently we come up against some great national crisis, some international catastrophe like that which Europe has faced since 1914, and the Church finds itself powerless to confront it and to deal with it. The Church has failed in Europe. Christianity has not failed; religion has not failed; but the Church, the institution, has completely failed; and we must admit it.

Pope Pius of Rome died of a broken heart

because he could not prevent the European war. His heart should not have broken; it was his church that really was broken long ago. Time was when the Pope could draw his line and say to the monarchs of the earth, "Thus far, and no farther shall you go." Time was when he could have stretched the ægis of his protection over Rheims, over Liège, over all of little Belgium, even as Richelieu in his advanced age did, over a defenceless maiden, saying:

"Then wakes the power that in the age of iron
Rose to curb the great and lift the low.
Mark where she stands! About her form I draw
The awful circle of our solemn church.
Set but a foot within that holy ground,
And on thy head, yea though it wore a crown,
I launch the curse of Rome!"

But the Church—the man-made Church—institutional religion, has no such power in Europe or the world today.

Again, the Church is charged with being undemocratic. They say that the Church gives a special precedence to wealthy men, that it fawns upon the rich, that it will not assail their business crimes—or to put it a little more mildly, their business irregularities; that the Church truckles to the well-to-do, welcomes the man in good clothes and pays little or no heed

to the man in threadbare garments; that the Church rents its pews and charges for them as it would for seats in a theatre; that the Church moves away from the downtown sections of the city just as rapidly as these sections become commercialized and boarding-housed, and gets out into the residence section where the well-to-do and the comfortable are all around it, to support it; that the Church has constantly an eye to the main chance; that it is no longer democratic. Once again the Church must admit the charge. It has been guilty of all these failures in its application of the brotherhood of man to man.

Again, the charge is brought that the Church is full of hypocrites, and that is true. There are plenty of men in the Church who are not really Christian men. There are plenty of men in it who are trying to appear better than they really are. The Church is full—we need not say full—but it is well filled, with men who are keeping other people out of the Church by the character of their lives, and by the knowledge that other men have of their transactions.

Still another charge. The Church maintains a worn-out, effete, back-number message. The Church is not preaching an up-to-date gospel, but instead is bolstering up certain dogmas and utterances of a threadbare past, laying em-

phasis upon the theological conceptions held by our Puritan ancestry, by our old German ancestry, by our old British ancestry, and maintaining that they are essential in this modern day. That is true. The Church is doing that. There are cobwebs all over the vaulted ceilings of the great cathedrals of the world; and cobwebs in the brains of the messengers of Jesus Christ. That is a fact.

Now, perhaps we have fairly well covered the indictment that is brought against the Church by her critics; and what is the plea that she will bring, when brought to the bar of public opinion; what weighted defence prefer? She will have to plead guilty. She cannot do otherwise if she is candid and honest and fair. She will have to say, "It is true I am divided; it is true I have been undemocratic; it is true at times I am hypocritical; it is true that I am maintaining a great many old worn-out articles of faith and practice." We shall have to plead guilty in behalf of the Church.

But when we have done so, we are able to add that there are certain extenuating circumstances; that men are all more or less hypocrites; that they are all undemocratic, first and last; that there is not anything that is solidly united; that there is not anybody but who maintains cobwebs in his brain and holds on

to old worn-out conceptions. That is not a justification for the Church, mark you. She is faulty and guilty in that she does these things, and everybody who does them is guilty, too. But, at least, there is some extenuation for the Church, and those who live in glass houses cannot fling too many stones at her.

Goethe was right when he said that the whole history of the Church is one mishmash of error and violence. True, she has slain and ostracized her best men; she has brought them as heretics to the bar of her judgment and condemned them under inquisitions. True, her vaulted arches have rung with their groans; her tessellated pavements have been blackened with their blood. Yet, when all is said and done, the Church has been the greatest force for righteousness in the history of civilization; with all of her imperfections, in the last two thousand years, she has done more for mankind than any other institution, system of philosophy, movement, or crusade has dared to claim for itself. She is the greatest power for righteousness in the world today. Talk about your courts of law, your palaces of justice, your temples of reform, your beneficent organizations, your republican congress halls,—as the sun rises in the east in the morning and courses to his setting in the west at

night, the shadow of the great Church of Christ falls upon all these lesser structures of the world even as that of a great cathedral falls upon townhall, shop, and home, of the village in which it is placed. All these have had their origin, their safeguard, and their hope in her.

In the third or fourth century, when the Dark Ages began, when religion had crumbled, when empires were falling about men's ears, when hope was gone, when life looked black, she gave enough inspiration to cement and hold together the disintegrated purposes and ideals of mankind; in the Middle Ages, the ages of chivalry, her light shone through, back and forth, the lame conceptions of life that men held, and she was the only tie that bound together the dissevered members of the human race. And in this present age she has kept alive an ethical ideal which, to say the least, is not at all in keeping with the spirit of purely material times. This much we must allow to her.

If there were any desire for controversy on the part of the Church, she has weapons with which she might turn against her accusers, and she might say to those who criticize her for being divided: "Are you united? Is your lodge united? Is your business life united?"

Is there harmony of effort in the nation, amongst the men of the same pursuit? You men born kin to each other, are you united?" She might turn to those who accuse her of being undemocratic and ask: "Are you democratic? Democracy has suffered in Europe and democracy is in danger in America as well. Democracy always lives in fear of her life. Do you never fawn upon wealth? Do you never seek out the rich man for favors and for opportunities, O you worldling?" She might turn upon those who accuse her of hypocrisy and say: "Is there any hypocrisy outside the church? Are there any men who try to appear better than they are in the judgment of their neighbors? You men of the world, inveighing against the Church, you who try to give the impression that you are better than some that are in the Church—beware, beware that you too are not the hypocrite!"

So, one after another, she might deal with the critics if she cared to, but it is not polemics that she ought to be engaged in. It is not argument, it is not defence. Far the wiser and far the more candid attitude for the Church to assume is to plead guilty to all of these and say: "The Church is human, the Church is fallible, the Church has failed, the Church has broken down at moments of great emer-

gency in the history of the world. Guilty, guilty, guilty!"

But let us ask what is offered in place of it? What have you to give, men of the world? Give us something better than the Church. We earnestly desire it. We will adopt it if you but convince us that it is better than the Church. Give us something else than the religion of Jesus Christ. Have you it in your possession? Tell us of it, we beg of you, we crave of you; give it to us.

No, we shall find that the great company of those who stand outside the Church and assail it have, for the most part, adopted the religion of naturalism. We are told that a great wave of secularism has been sweeping over the civilized world. Naturalism might be a better word by which to designate it, for, after all, it is a type of religion. Men cannot live without a religion of some kind. That, apparently, is what it is; a movement widespread, evident in the thought of Germany, present in the life of England, widely disseminated in the United States,—a movement that may be called the naturalistic religion, a religion of nature.

This is the way its votary talks: "My religion is man. My religion is goodness to my fellow-man. My religion is fulfilling the

Golden Rule and treating other men as I would have them treat me. My religion is visiting hospitals and taking care of the sick and orphans. My religion is the square deal. My religion is labor, is economic reform. My religion is in being kind and urbane, helpful to the world about me." It is precisely what Feuerbach meant when he spoke of the development of his religion, saying, "My religion first was God, then it was reason, then it was man," meaning by that, that the world had passed through the stages first of worship of a personal God, then through rationalism and agnosticism, and finally into a naturalistic religion, the religion of the promotion of man. Naturalistic religion says: "Get the best out of your life that is possible for you to get here and now. I do not care for any religion that does not give me a chance to work, a chance to stand side by side and on equal footing with other workers; organize forces for the benefit of and uplifting of man; selfishness here and now, this world's goods, this world's chance, this world's pleasures, things that I can have now. I don't want to wait. I don't want to put off until a future life. I want the good of life here and now."

That is the attitude, is it not, of the secularism, the natural religion of the day. Let us

treat it honestly and kindly and candidly. A great part of this is the spirit of the Christian gospel, after all. Just as we may recognize many of the best things in rationalism, agnosticism, in any movement in the intellectual world, so may we recognize many of the valuable things in naturalism. But does it reach the depths of life? Does it solve the problem of life? Does it finally give a deep-set satisfaction in life? That is what we wish to know. If we can find out that it does, let us adopt it and go along with the rest. Let us see.

Does material comfort and welfare bring the ultimate satisfaction,—the development of the soul, the communion of souls with other souls, the harmony of life with other lives? Does wealth in this world bring spiritual development, love, union? It is not good for man to live alone, and oftentimes we shall find that those who have had the greatest prosperity, the most of material opportunity, continuous effort, achievement and pleasure, have at last been constrained to find this world lonely—a sterile promontory, stale, flat, and unprofitable. Material welfare often palls; it does not reach the basis of our nature. Man does not live by bread alone. There is something deeper and profounder in us than can

be so satisfied. So, though we may live in the house by the side of the road and be a friend to man, though we may minister to the sick and afflicted, and though we may feed the hungry and the poor, though we may have opportunity to work, these outward acts do not reach the basis of life.

It has been pointed out that two great man-made institutions of Europe collapsed in 1914. One was Socialism and one was the Church. Socialism, with eight million brothers of the International, sworn that they would not fight each other, is a ruin, perhaps only temporarily, but none the less a ruin, from roof-tree to foundation stone. The Church, with three hundred millions of brothers, also went down before the shock; and millions of her sons are dead or in the trenches. We have already seen why the Church failed: because she was divided, undemocratic, behind the hour, appealing in her message to fear and a selfish desire to save one's own little soul. But why did Socialism fail? Was it not because her ultimate appeal also was selfish, material? Did she not hold before men's eyes a Paradise of plenty, an Elysium of short hours, high pay, and much leisure? All these things are worth while, valuable in themselves; but they are not the end of life, and the common man, deep down

in his heart, knows it. The Church must learn from Lowell that

“Heaven’s gate is shut to him who comes alone,
Save thou a soul and it shall save thine own.”

And Socialism must learn from Jesus Christ that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Militarism succeeded where both these other institutions failed, because it appealed to the heroic in man. It said to him, no doubt deceiving him, but reaching him, “Come out, not to ease and short hours, not to high pay, and equal opportunity, not to personal safety; but to danger, hardship, wounds, imprisonment and death, on behalf of wife, mother, children, native land.” To reach men you must reach deep down.

If the Church is wise, if the movements for reform are wise, they will remember this. They will appeal not to what is selfish and low in him; but to what is fine and heroic and high. They will call him to a huge task, a high outlook, and a great love. They will call him to a mystic union of himself with other men, and all with God. He is by nature religious. He cannot live alone, nor without God. He is not content without touch with

other souls and with the Oversoul. Work does not satisfy; opportunity to do tasks and develop one's capabilities does not reach; benevolent organizations do not content. Religious societies, parties, none of these go where religion reaches, where the Church of Jesus Christ can appeal. Here we can sing and sing in sincerity:

“How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord,
In one another's peace delight,
And so fulfil the Word.”

The old-fashioned song is good to this hour. To be sure, there are men in the Church that do not believe profoundly in the Church, nor find the best in the Church. To be sure, we should return to the old conception religious Israel once held that all were not Israel who were of Israel, but that there was within Israel a chosen community, a sacred few, a remnant. So within the Church there is a beloved community,—those who have nothing else as their high ideal but the spiritual life, nothing else but the love one of another and of humanity, nothing else but the uplift of others into unity and harmony with God. That beloved community within the Church is the Church, and it is all-conquering, it is all-powerful, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

This, then, is the reply that the Church must make to the criticism of the day. It must say: "I know that I have failed, I plead guilty to the indictment. I am divided. I am hypocritical. I am broken and dissevered. I am undemocratic. I am behind the times. I admit it all. But will you show me something human that is not divided, that is democratic, that is thoroughly up to the times, and is without hypocrisy, sincere, square, and candid?" Further than that, the Christian may add: "Will you give me something that satisfies my soul, that brings me into intimate touch and harmony with men and women of the highest aims and purposes, that furnishes not merely work for my hands to do, not merely service for me to render, but aspiration and love and harmony with the powers within and above? Give me that, for nothing short of that will satisfy this craving, restless, uneasy soul of mine."

There is a statue on the other side of the water—in the church at Copenhagen. Let us go to see it when next we go abroad. It is already familiar to many, from photograph and plaster-cast. It is Thorwaldsen's figure of the Christ. There He stands, the great White Lord, as if He had just come in through the closed doors and stood in the midst, His

hands outstretched as if in blessing and His lips ready softly to breathe, "Peace be to this house!"

And let us see, one day, the original of that statue, the great White Lord Himself! Can you not almost see Him now, as He comes in through the closed, or half-closed doors of our selfish hearts, saying to jostling class and class, the warring nations, the jarring creeds, "Peace, peace be to this house!"

Even so, come Lord Jesus, and Thy Kingdom!

Come into the hearts of men,
Pervade, enkindle them,
Reach out and over them,
Son of Man, Thy sway!
Kingdom of God, ah when!
Into the hearts of men,—
Peace for the souls of them,
Come, come, we pray!

VII

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

BUT now a few words more are necessary concerning the earthly representative of this kingdom. Who is this Jesus, this Son of God, Son of Man, head of the visible Church, chief cornerstone?

Your man in the street is your true mystic. Questions of controversy concern him little. Like Gallio, he is careless of these things. Consciously or subconsciously he is aware of the distinction between fact and truth. He recollects that, as a child, he demanded to know concerning every story told him whether it was a true story, meaning whether it was a fact-story. He is accustomed to the same demand from his own child. But grown to man's estate, he is far more concerned with the truth of a story than with the fact of a story. He knows that Jean Valjean is truer than any mere fact concerning the galleys of Toulon. He sees the truth in Romola, David Copperfield, Colonel Newcome, Hedda Gabler. He knows that there never was a man in Denmark,

let alone a prince at Elsinore, half so true as Hamlet, the melancholy Dane. Your man of the world may think he is anxious to know facts, but in proportion as he is a man and a mystic, he is far more anxious to know truths.

So, with advancing manhood and increasing distance from the time of the events, he is less and less concerned with the genealogies of Joseph and Mary, with the miracles of water and wine, with the physical healings, with the bare facts of the Gospel narratives; and he is more and more concerned with the Sermon on the Mount, the parables of the Master, the closing chapters of St. John, the spirit of Jesus, the Way, the Truth, the Life, that has passed on into soul after soul and nation after nation. Born of a virgin or born in the course of nature, cradled in a manger or cradled in the arms of the Sphinx, disputing with the doctors or playing with the children of Nazareth—it is all one to the man of today, and all very true and beautiful.

The important thing is that Jesus was there and that Jesus is here. The modern man needs not to be assured that Jesus was divine, he needs to be shown that He was human. He has an overwhelming consciousness of the Deity residing in Christ. His natural cry is: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O

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Lord." He needs an increasing sense of the humanity in Jesus. He needs to hear the word, "It is I, be not afraid."

The line of reasoning so long ago set forth by Professor Young in his little book, "The Christ of History," has an overpowering weight for the mind of the average man impelling him to the conclusion that Jesus is divine. It is the line that the mind follows automatically. It waives all questions of miracle and inspiration; it leaves these matters undebated and undetermined. It takes the Gospel narratives as substantially correct, in historical detail; considers that such a person as Jesus lived, spoke practically the words ascribed to Him, through a period of about three years, and was martyred. More than this it is not necessary to claim. Less than this it is impossible, without dethroning all contemporary history, to maintain. From such easily accepted ground, the reasoning proceeds about as follows:

The circumstances of Jesus' birth and life utterly fail to account for His achievements and His impression on the world without some mysterious, some inexplicable element in His nature. For example, He was poor, a handworker. To be sure poverty may be dignified, handwork dignifying; but, to say the least, it

is not conducive to intellectual achievement. Some men have lifted themselves upward from handwork to mental eminence, but always with one hand on the loom or plane, and the other on a book. But Jesus had no books, no schools, no universities. "How hath this man learning, having never learned?"

Again, His youth and the shortness of His career utterly fail to account for the magnitude of His figure in the world. Some world conquerors have been young. Some heads of great governments and crusades; but bear in mind that their achievements were purely practical in character, at the most political; while Jesus' eminence was intellectual, spiritual, religious. The great saints and sages and philosophers have been elderly men before reaching an all-powerful dominion over men. Young men for action, old men for wisdom. Furthermore, He taught only eighteen months to three years, never outside of the little strip of land called Palestine, never wrote a line to leave behind, and lives as no other lives in the minds and hearts of myriads of men. Who was He?

So the argument might be carried forward until the appeal is made to the testimony of Christ Himself. Surely one who shows so much weight with the world should be given

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some weight with regard to Himself, His own origin, and purpose in the world. He says, "Which one of you convicteth me of sin?" He says: "I and my Father are one. I do always those things that please my Father. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He accepts the confession of Simon Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the glad exclamation of Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

Could He have been mistaken, deluded, flattered as the Roman Emperors were flattered, into a belief in His Deity? If so it were a grievous fault! And it would also be inconsistent with the sobriety, balance, poise, of all His sayings and doings. Furthermore, it would be necessary that the idea of the divine revelation of God in human form should first be in the minds of the flatterers before it could be planted in His own. Such an idea was far from their thoughts. They wanted Him for an earthly sovereign, and so thought of Him. To fabricate the notion of the divine Christ of God, one would have to be a religious genius indeed, would have to be the equal of Christ, would have to be the Christ Himself.

So runs the mind of the common man regarding Jesus. He thinks of Him as the incarnation of God. He believes it reasonable

that if there is a God, and he knows there is, He would seek to reveal Himself to His child, man. Just as rapidly as man was able to appreciate His qualities, so rapidly would the Father unfold Himself to the Son. It is an interesting fact, and a very convenient one upon which to reason, that the life of the race is very much like the life of an individual. The old English dramatist said:

“All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.”

These seven ages are just as marked in the history of mankind, or seventy ages, for the matter of that, as they are in the individual: the race had its infancy, just as the child. And yet the race has never been in such unconscious condition, so far as we know, that it was not aware of its kinship to its parent—its Maker—its God. It has felt, always, and in every place, since man became a conscious, responsible agent, that it was allied to God, to a power not itself, which makes for righteousness.

Naturally God, in His dealing with such a race, could not reveal Himself, to the fullest, in its days of infancy; just as the parent deal-

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ing with his child does not reveal himself fully in the days of that little one's infancy. The mother shows the child her love, from the very beginning, and she shows it her authority; but she cannot, until the child reaches the age of responsibility, reveal to it her reason, her perseverance, her courage, her knowledge of its capacities and its difficulties—a thousand and one things which, with advancing years, she does fully and freely unfold.

God dealt with the race in just the same way. We find that aboriginal men looked out into the world about them, and saw the same evidences of God that the refined and polished moderns find. They looked upon the mountains, and they felt that God resided there. If they were plains people, they looked up at the sun and the stars, and worshipped these. If they were an agricultural people, they worshipped the great river which brought, in its turgid stream, the rich alluvial deposit from far-distant sections, and laid it to fertilize the soil which supported them; it was natural that Egypt worshipped the Nile. They built their temples to the sun, high up on the mountain tops, where the slanting rays of early morning touched them first, and where the rosy-fingered sunset laid its hand upon them last. God they saw in the light of setting suns, the round

ocean, and the living air, the blue sky, and ultimately they saw Him in the mind of man.

As time went on, they personified these forces of nature, and made their Gods human in form and appearance, like themselves. So arose the heroes and the demigods of the classic peoples. Men felt kinship between themselves and God, and they cried out, in dim, distant, past ages, to Him: "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou hast made him a little lower than God, and hast crowned him with glory and honor." Feeling the divine spark within them, recognizing the presence of divinity in their own lives, they were finding rapidly the truth.

God was revealing Himself to them in themselves; in the movements of their tribes, and their nations; in the events of their histories. And so we find God still revealed, do we not, in the lives of individual men? Do you venture to say that, now and then, one cannot see the reflection of God in the face of a man? Do you say that there are no reflections of the Eternal in the lives of temporal men and women?

David and Jonathan showed something of the divine in their heroic relations one to another; so did Isaiah and his sons; and so

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Socrates and his pupil Plato, Confucius and Lao-Tsze, Buddha, Zoroaster, Damon and Pythias, Judas Maccabeus. The earth opened in the forum in Rome at one time, so goes the old legend. A great chasm was in the midst between two hills, and it seemed as if the earth would burst wide open and all its people be engulfed. The wise men and the priests said, "If there is some young, strong hero, who dares to plunge into this gulf and give his life for the people, it will close, and all shall be saved." And was it not Marcus Curtius, upon his horse, who leaped without hesitation into the abyss, and gave his life for the salvation of his people? True or false, the story nevertheless has in it the ring of the divine,—an advanced reflection of the atonement in the sacrifice of one for others.

That sort of thing is modern as well as ancient. A woman wrote to the medical college in St. Louis, some time since, that her husband was sick, out of work, her children starving; that a few more days would tell the tale for her and them; and would the medical college give her three hundred dollars for her body? A tactless woman, looking upon a French soldier in the hospital, his face half shot away, murmured audibly, "What a terrible disfigurement!" "No, madam," answered

the patient, "a decoration!" There are flashes of the divine to be seen every day and all around us, like lightning on a dark summer night.

"A picket frozen on duty,
A mother starved for her brood;
Socrates drinking the hemlock,
And Jesus on the rood;
And millions who, humble and nameless,
The straight hard pathway trod;—
Some call it consecration,
And others call it God!"

It appears, then, the most reasonable thing in the world that, if the Father should set out deliberately to show Himself to man, He would adopt, would He not, for His full and final revelation, the form of a man. This is a book that all men could understand. Not in sacred writings, not in the utterances of prophets, however inspired, was God to be finally revealed to man; not in the systems of sages and philosophers, however beautiful and profound; not in the wild imaginings of erratic men, first and last, could God be reflected adequately to the minds of men. There are some who could not understand the prophets; some who could not grasp the philosophers; some who could not follow the intricacies of the magicians of human thought and human knowledge; some who could not read a book; but there are none who

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could not understand a human being, in so far as a human being can show himself and can be read and known. Even a child can read a face. How it will respond to the divine that shines in some countenances, and be attracted, and give itself unreservedly into the arms of even imperfect divinity!

Therefore humanity cried out for a man, to show God to them; and in the fulness of time God heard and answered that human cry. There is a beautiful story in Exodus of Moses' desire to see God; but the law was that a man could not look upon God and live; no doubt that was literally true. The race was not old enough, the race was not developed enough to look upon God and to comprehend Him—its intellect undoubtedly would break down—it would fail utterly to conceive and grasp the picture of God if presented to it. So, we are told, Moses was put into the cleft of a rock. God put His hand over him, and passed by the chasm, allowing Moses to see His retreating form. The story is attractive, because so true with regard to half-developed, half-trained, half-educated peoples. These peoples were not ready yet to see God in the form of man. It took the fulness of the times for the world to be prepared for this vision—this revelation.

Therefore just at the moment when Israel was about to be crushed and destroyed and scattered all over the world, to create its synagogues in every nation, with a platform prepared for the proclamation of this new revelation of God; just at the moment when the Greek language, the most subtle and the most delicate of all the languages of all time, was scattered far and wide as the language of commerce, of government, of diplomacy; just at the moment when Rome was at her greatest power, when peace was spread like a mantle over the known world; when the Roman roads rolled like wide, white ribbons from the golden milestone in the forum, protected from end to end by Roman legionaries; when Rome had dethroned her gods; when she was feeling in the dark if haply she might find something to take their place; at that moment, in the fulness of the time, as we can look back now and plainly see, God sent His Son into the world. This was the answer to the demand of man that he see God in human form—the only book that all men, everywhere, could read and understand. This is the incarnation.

Now, the common man is not concerned to answer the question: How was Jesus divine, and how was He human? how much divine and how much human? He has no scalpel keen

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enough to dissect Him, no balance delicate enough to weigh Him, no acid-test, no test-tube fine enough to distil and analyze Him.

The divineness of humanity is not a difficulty in the way of grasping and accepting the divinity of Christ, but, on the contrary, a great aid. Man knows that he has the spark of divine in him. We hear people proclaiming it today as if it were something new and strange. But man has always known it. He knows he was made in the image of God. Yet he recognizes his own failure. He knows that he has marred and scarred that image; that he has defaced it, and at times well-nigh destroyed it. There is nothing he is quite so conscious of as the fact that he has not lived up to his parentage; that he is the unworthy son of a worthy Father.

Let man, then, look at one who is not a failure—at Jesus Christ of Nazareth, tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin; perfect, spotless, conscious, all the time, of the unity and harmony between Himself and His Father; “I do always the things which please my Father; the Father and I are one;” with no broken communion between Him and His Father; with no veil hanging between Him and His Father’s face; with no gulf yawning between Him and His Father; but with free, con-

stant, unbroken communion between Him and His Father, a perfect fellowship and comradeship! When we look upon that—His sinlessness, and His consciousness that He, and He alone, was sent into the world to redeem and to save perplexed and distracted and lost humanity; that He was the one to do this crying out: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: No man cometh unto the Father but by me: Follow thou me: Thy sins be forgiven thee!"—when you look upon that face of Jesus Christ, oh! you marred and broken son of God, what do you say?

He was divine. He was so much more divine than I am that there is a difference actually in kind between Him and me. The quantitative difference is so great that it amounts to a qualitative difference; and, as I look upon Him, I decrease and He increases. He is the son of God—the express revelation of the Father, for, what God is, He is. When I want to learn of God, I look at Him; when I want to pray to God, I think of Him. His face is before me all the time, and He is the only full revelation that humanity has. Of course He is divine! He is God manifest in the flesh.

No, the man in the street needs little argument to convince him that Jesus is divine. He

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needs much to show him that Jesus is human. What should be borne in upon him is not so much the divineness of Christ as the divineness of man. What Jesus was, man needs to become. Our religion should be not less Christo-centric, but more Jesus-centric, more man-centric. The incarnation of God in Christ was but the beginning of His revelation. It must be completed in man.

So, it follows that Jesus must be born again, must come again. God must be revealed again. Continuously and progressively must this beautiful birth go on within the hearts and lives of men; for, where a man takes Jesus Christ into him, that man not merely is born again; but Christ lives again. God is revealed again. This is the Second Coming of Christ. This is the Advent.

We sang, at the Gypsy Smith meetings in America, a few years since, the old Welsh hymn, couched in the oldest phraseology of the oldest orthodoxy: "The Spirit answers with the blood, and tells me I am born of God." Some of us have heard the lilt and swing of those lines and that theme, all through the months that have followed; and, while we have realized all the time that those are old, old words, and old, old conceptions, we have realized increasingly their truth, their value,

and their message to the most modern day—their perfect harmony with the most scientific and liberal thinking of the present age. The Spirit of God answers to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and re-echoes in my soul, if I am born of God, to tell me that I am His child, a member of His family, a son of God, and joint heir with Jesus Christ. The old conceptions of the Church, handed down through all the centuries, shall not altogether be swept away. The consciousness that we have had of the divine presence of Jesus, in history, is with us yet, and the confidence that we have in Him. If we take Him into our lives, become one with Him, in harmony with Him, imitate, so far as it is possible for us to do, all His qualities, drinking of the waters of life which He said He gave to us freely, answering the call which He gave to us all, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”—if we do these things, Christ is born again within us—Christ in you—the hope of glory!

No, the difficulty is not that men do not think well about Christ. It is that they do not do so well as they think. The vital question to be addressed to them is not, “What think ye of Christ?” but, “What will ye do with the man called Jesus?” Right thinking is important, but it is valueless until coined into life. In

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point of fact, no thought is really ours, no truth can be possessed by us, except as that thought, that truth enters into our lives. Not only spiritual truth, but all truth, must be spiritually discerned. There is no such thing as purely mental truth. It is not the scholar, knowing a lexicon, who knows a language. It is the man into whose life the language has entered. It is not necessarily the owner of a picture-gallery or a park who really owns these things of beauty; but it is the art student or the common man into whose soul the message of the canvas or the hillside has entered and become a part of him, a joy forever, that is the real owner.

“He that willeth to do my will,” said the Master, “shall know of the doctrine;” and no words more in harmony with the laws of mind and life ever were spoken. It is not the man who knows the letter of Scripture, not the theologian who has mentally grasped the systems, but the worshipper who has opened his heart and life to the Master Himself, that shall know the doctrine of Christ. You have known many a man, who they said was “deep in Bible,” to use an old phrase, whose heart was as hard and dry and bitter as a peach-stone, who had not learned the alphabet of the Gospel, had not mastered the rudiments of the

thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. And, vice versa, you may have known many a humble wayfarer, though simple, whose soul was steeped in God, and whose eyes were open to the truth of Scripture.

There was an old hunter and trapper who lived some years since in a cañon in the Santa Ynez mountains near Santa Barbara. His name was Bush—appropriate to his calling and his environment. His cabin was a dozen miles or so from town. One night, on a rare visit to civilization, he heard the drum-beat of the Salvation Army and followed it. The natural religion within him sprang up and flowered. He wanted, after frequent visits to the barracks, to volunteer. But the army could not admit him until he gave up his tobacco. He readily rid himself of swearing—the only other besetting sin of which the old man was aware; and he struggled manfully to rid himself also of his plug. But in the loneliness of his little mountain home, he would take it out, turn it over in his hands, caress it, and at last sink his teeth into it.

One day he came down to the little brick ivy-covered church near the seashore. They took him in and baptized him, tobacco and all, in the surf of the Blue Pacific. Every Sunday he was at service; every Wednesday night he

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trudged the twelve miles in to prayer meeting and the twelve miles back. There are those who can remember the broken, stumbling, ungrammatical prayers he made, the passages of Scripture he used to quote,—or misquote,—for he never got one right. But if ever there was a true follower of the Son of God, it was he. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings!

Of course no man can understand the Bible unless he yields himself to God. Of course no man can understand the mystery of Christ unless he yields himself in glad and loving surrender. No man can understand Chaucer, Shakespeare, Goethe, Dante, until he puts himself in harmony with the great singer. No man can appreciate music, a song, a story, or a sermon, except in so far as he surrenders himself to the message and the messenger. This is the law. Says Mr. Kipling:

“These are the laws of the jungle,
And many and mighty are they;
But the head and the hoof of the law,
And the haunch and the hump is—obey!”

That, too, is the law of the jungles of the inner life.

Now it is possible, no doubt, to obey Christ all by one's self, without comradeship, fellowship, or church. There were those who followed Him afar off. Perhaps there still are.

But this is an extremely difficult thing to do, and there are few that compass it. For it is so easy to lose sight of Him in the distance, at a turning, in the crowds. It is the last thing we should dare to say that no man can be a Christian without joining a church. Doubtless there are many who serve Him without publicly naming His name. But these put a heavy handicap upon themselves, work against great odds, drag their sledge over sand and gravel where they might have snow and easier going.

The Church has no monopoly on Christ and God, to be sure. The Father's love cannot be cornered. But certain it is that far and away the majority of those who seek to be near Him are in the church. It is good business to go where the most business in our line is being done—birds of a feather. That man makes a grave mistake who isolates himself from his fellows of similar bent. No man is strong enough to live alone, and die alone—it is not good for man. He needs sympathy, understanding, fellowship in his high aims. He is a gregarious creature.

This is why, perhaps, sheep are used so often in sacred scripture to signify men. Humanity flocks as sheep do. They both need shepherding. They are lost alone. Though they walk

through the valley of the shadow of death—a narrow, rocky gorge down Jericho way, south of Jerusalem—they will fear evil unless some one be with them. If they are to find green pastures, they must be led to them. They are imitative, and feed always with heads in the same direction.

With increasing sophistication there is increasing independence of spirit; and yet strange as it may seem, by the increasing complexity of society, there is forced upon its members increasing dependence as well. There is a constantly growing friction between the man and his environment. His freedom can come to him only with his service to society. The phrase of the prayer book is most illuminating, when, referring to God, it adds: "Whose service is perfect freedom." Our true independence never comes to us except in service, subjection of will, subordination of self.

How futile, then, become our little declarations of individual independence! Jesus has put the whole story into the parable of the marriage feast. A certain king prepared supper for his son, and sent out his invitations. Regrets, for the most part, were returned. One said he had bought a yoke of oxen and must go and prove them, try them. No man who has handled live stock ever buys first and

tries afterward. Subterfuge, evidently. Another said he had bought a piece of land and must go and look at it. Bankruptcy awaits the real estate operator who works in such a way. Also subterfuge. The third said, "I have married a wife and therefore cannot come." Most evident subterfuge of all; for what place more appropriate to take a happy bride than to the marriage supper of a prince? Consummate literary artist that He is, Jesus has put not one legitimate reason into the mouths of any who sent regrets. There is a very clear distinction between a reason and an excuse. When you invite a man to dinner and he declines, you know usually very well whether he assigns reason or excuse.

"Excuses are clothes, which, asked unawares,
Good breeding to naked necessity spares."

Most so-called reasons that men give for not answering openly the call of Christ are only excuses and no reasons at all. They, and the possible answers to them, run like this:

I don't know enough. Enough what? O, Scripture, doctrine, the rules of the Church. Do you know Christ, love Christ, want to follow Christ? That is enough. More than this no man has the right to ask of you. Less than this few men in this Christian land possess.

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I know too much. I have read books: Huxley, Darwin, Herbert Spencer. I know too much to accept your Bible and your Church. But do you know Christ? It is not enough to know all these others, who themselves would be the first to declare their own ignorance. Do you know the beauties and the secrets of love, sacrifice, heroism, death for others? You are not of much account in the world if you know too much to be willing to die for some cause, some one, some ideal. No, you do not know too much but rather too little.

I am not sure that I believe. Believe what? Well, the doctrines of the future life, reward, punishment; free-will, foreordination; certain of the doctrines of the Church. Could you make Peter's confession of faith, "I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God," interpreting it for yourself? Yes, I could do that. Then that is sufficient. It is all the Church has a right to exact of you. It is all that most churches would exact. General Lew Wallace, in his "Prince of India," puts it into the mouth of a monk of the Middle Ages to propound this creed as a basis for the union of Christendom: "I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God." That is not Lew Wallace's creed; it is not Simon of Bethsaida's creed; it is God Almighty's creed;

for Jesus said: "Blessed art thou, Simon bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." That ought to be enough for any church, enough for any man.

I do not feel just right about joining a church. Suppose you had a dinner invitation and responded that you did not feel right about coming. Your host would say, "Are you angry with me?" "No." "Oh, you are ill?" "No." "What then?" "I can't explain, but I do not feel right." Is the excuse absurd? But no, not altogether. The Church may be to blame for giving you the impression that you had to feel some subtle, intangible, mysterious upheaval of the soul that would indicate to you the movings of divine grace—whatever that is. But the acceptance of Christ is a thing not of feeling but of will. "He that willeth to do my will." Will you, or will you not?

I am not good enough. Precisely the reason you need Christ and His Church. He came not to call the righteous. You need sympathy, support, friendship, fellowship, the unity of the body of Christ.

I am too good. Nobody ever makes that excuse, you say? It is one of the most frequent of all. It is not put in just those words, but

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it amounts to that in substance. This is the way it is stated: I am better than many of the men in the Church. There are liars, and cheats, hypocrites, and rascals in the Church. I know who they are. I am better than those men. I'll not go into a church where they are. I'll not join a church that has such people in it.

Listen, friend, to the Master: Two men went up to the temple to pray. One of them, a Pharisee, stood and prayed thus with himself: "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are—nor as this publican here. I give tithes. I fast. I do not do as some other men I know." The publican lay with his face on the sanded floor of the temple and prayed: "Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner!" Who was the Pharisee, the hypocrite in this case? Was it not he who pointed the finger at his fellow-man—no matter who he was—and thanked God that he was not like him?

And ~~who~~ are you, sir, that dares point the finger of judgment at any fellow-man, no matter where nor who he is! What do you know of the cry of his soul for help in mastering temptations the strength of which you, in your smug self-righteousness, have never known? He is in the Church because he needs and knows he needs help—a Power not himself that makes for righteousness. Thou Pharisee,

thou hypocrite, thou whited sepulchre, down with that accusing finger, and never let that excuse, that vainglorious, self-laudatory, hypocritical, damnable lie soil your lips again.

Still unconvinced, the cringing censor justifies himself thus: "But I do not profess anything, and he does."

The follower of Christ professes nothing. He confesses much. He is no "professor of religion." That is a mistaken bit of old phraseology. He is a confessor. He confesses he is a sinner, which is more than you do. He confesses Christ is his Saviour. You profess to be your own saviour. He confesses he needs the help of other men and women, you profess to be strong enough to stand alone.

"Ah, but there is a difference," he continues. "A man outside the Church may do many things that a man inside the Church may not do." What, pray? and why, pray? Are there two standards of right and wrong, one for churchmen and one for outsiders? Are there two moral laws, one for the Christian and one for the worldling? The position is indefensible, hypocritical, absurd. There is nothing a man has the right to do outside the Church that he has not equal right to do inside. There is nothing that is wrong for a man outside the Church that is not equally

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wrong inside. Both are in the world, are they not? Both are in society, are they not? Their obligations are just as great and binding to their fellow-men in one case as the other. Their obligations are just as great and just as binding to themselves and to their God, upon one as upon the other. No man can escape responsibility by remaining out of the Church. The Church is designed to help him bear responsibility.

It is time now to concede that there are hypocrites in the Church. Some one has said he hopes the time will never come when there are not, for then there will be nothing in the Church worth imitating. Imitation is the sincerest flattery.

But there are more hypocrites, two to one, outside than inside. There are hypocrites in the lodge; hypocrites in society; hypocrites in business, shoals of them; hypocrites in politics, oceans of them; hypocrites in universities, in medicine, law, the ministry. The difference is that men inside the Church are trying not to be, and men outside often are not.

Mack Lucas was a travelling salesman. He was hard-drinking, hard-swearing, hard-dealing, hard-thinking. He was hard every way. He saw the faults of church-folk and would have none of it or of them. At last a minister,

who was also a fellow-man, got under Mack's shell, and after so long a time the hard man softened and confessed his Lord. He was changed, he was humbled. One night, some months after, his friend and pastor met Mack in a darkened back street of their little village, coming from the railway station, toward his home. He was carrying a bundle in both arms on his breast.

"What have you there, Mack?"

"A baby," said Mack, half defiantly, half shamefacedly. "We've always wanted one, my wife and I. But I reckon I wasn't good enough for God to give us one. Then we made up our minds we'd adopt one."

By the way, adoption is the finest form of charity.

"So," continued Mack, "I went up to the orphans' home at Sedalia and I asked them to give me the puniest, scrawnier, weakest, most good-for-nothing little rat they had in the lot. If they'd had a cross-eyed one, or a lame one, that's the one I'd have wanted. I'm not good enough to have a real healthy, fat, fine one. So they gave me this, and I'm taking it home."

That was thirteen years ago, or thereabouts. The other day I saw, with my friend the pastor, that baby girl, with her high-school braids down her back, her high-school books in her

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hands. She was the daintiest, prettiest, trippingest little maiden in the county town. And I shook hands with Mack, the gray upon his temples, the wrinkles upon his face, and the laughter and the light of God in his clean eyes.

Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. It remains for the Church of Christ in the world to gather all such into its fold. Nothing less than the concentrated effort of all can win such as these into its arms.

An old friend of mine in a Middle Western State, gray of beard, but still firm of hand, was talking reminiscently of pioneer days. The frontiersman's blood was still in his veins; for it was not long after this conversation that he plunged into the wilderness again, in the Rainy River district of Canada. Doubtless he sleeps under its wild, wet, tangled grass today, for he told the story many years ago. Said he:

"I used to herd sheep for my father, and I came to know them pretty well, and so did he. We were fond of them, too. One night I brought the flock up from the big pasture, to shut them into the little lot for the night. Father stood by the gate and counted them."

Possibly the old man may have said "named them." We have read, have we not, that "The good shepherd knoweth his own sheep, and calleth them all by name."

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“When they had all passed in, my father said:

“‘There is one sheep missing, son.’

“Then he told me to go down one side of the big pasture, and he would go down the other. We did so; and we found the one sheep at the far end. It was dark now, and cold. We tried to drive him, but he kept running back to the fence and trying to get through. You can’t make much headway driving a sheep. He was too heavy to carry. At last my father said:

“‘Come, son. I know what we can do.’

“So back up to the barns and the little lot we went, opened the gates, brought the whole flock out, took them nearly a mile down to the far side of the big pasture; and we had no trouble then in bringing that one sheep home.”

Perhaps the old man saw the application of his story. If so, he said nothing more. Perhaps the Church may one day see the moral contained in it and act upon it. God grant it may be so.

The pastor of a church in the suburbs of Chicago, Dr. W. S. Abernethy, baptized a certain boy whose name was Norman Patterson. The lad carried newspapers to the minister’s house and neighborhood. One morn-

ing the minister, rising early, saw the boy go past on the run. It was so the next morning and the next. The preacher determined that next day he would stop the lad and inquire the cause of his haste. To his inquiry, Norman hurled back breathless and unintelligible words. Next day, the minister spread legs and arms across the pavement and brought the runner to a halt.

"Well," said Norman, "I am running to get myself in training. I believe I can run. I would like to go to Stockholm for the international Olympic games, and I'm going to try. I believe I can run."

With the pastor's advice and encouragement, he went to the Chicago Athletic Club and sought out the trainer, Delaney, saying, "I believe I can run; and I would like to try for the team that is going to Stockholm."

"What have you made the mile in?"

"I don't know. I've never tried; but I believe I can run."

"Well, haven't you any idea what you can run a mile in? The record is four-fifteen and two-fifths. Percy Taylor, of Cornell, who is to run here next week in the preliminaries, can make four-twenty and holds the Eastern intercollegiate record. Anderson, of Nebraska, who will also run, has made four-eighteen,

and holds the Western record. What do you think you can do? ”

“ I don’t know. I am sure, though, that I can beat those fellows. I know I can run.”

The next week, the lad, who had never put on a track-suit, went into the preliminaries with those old veterans; and at the first trial, he held his own with both of them, making the mile in four minutes and twenty seconds. At the second trial, when the pace grew hotter, he made it in four, two and four-fifths; and held the world’s record for fifteen minutes until a runner in New York clipped off a fraction more. But Norman Patterson went to Stockholm and wore the Stars and Stripes around his waist because he had got it into his head that he could run.

No man can tell what is in him until he tries. Be a runner in the race for righteousness; enter the great Olympian; lay aside every weight, forget the things that are behind, look forward to what is before. Your country needs you; yes—and your Christ!

VIII

THE CHARMED LIFE

ON the ground of expediency alone, one does well to put himself, so far as he is able, into harmony with the Power that made the world and rules it. It is not for fear's sake, it is not to save one's soul, it is not to prepare for death; it is rather for the love of the best, it is to save men and the world, it is to prepare for life, to make the most possible of one's self, that we should place our strength and force in the organized trenches with God.

It is not long since almost every lad in the schools and colleges, every man in the street, if asked what he wished most to accomplish in the world, would have answered, if he was quite frank and honest: "I want to make a fortune; I want success; I am looking for commercial, professional efficiency." But now the tide has turned, has it not? Lad and man alike would answer today, for the most part, if they were frank and honest: "I want to make my life count for as much as it will; I want to

make of myself the best product of a man I can; I want development, efficiency, both for my own good and the good of society. My success will come, not in what I get for myself, but the impress and the uplift I can accomplish." At least, this latter position is fast gaining ground.

Now what is the test of personal and social efficiency? St. Paul gives us a picture of the fruits of these. He walks through the orchard of life and he tells us that the fruits of the Spirit, evidences of the presence of God in the lives of men, are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance. These are the manifestations of a life rooted and grounded in the soil of the Eternal. By their fruits ye shall know them. Look at these fruits:

Love is the greatest thing in the world. Love is not a gentle, optimistic, diffusive good will to all. There are those who have never made an enemy—never made anything. But love is active, aggressive, positive. Love is the good physician who in emergency sleeps, if he sleeps at all, with one ear open for the telephone-call of need; love is the soft-footed, firm-handed, cool-headed nurse who ministers at the bed of agony; love is the daring servant of the people and the living God who goes into office

fearing and observing the face of no man, into the court room or the campaign, into the market or the manufactory, into the stockyards or the store, telling the truth, dealing honestly, and looking out for others' benefit and not his own alone. Are not the finest lines in Tennyson these two:

"Love took up the harp of life and smote on all its chords
with might,
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in
music out of sight."

Joy and peace, two twin fruits, worthy of a Burbank's best. These come to him who has given the spirit of God free-play within him. "My peace I leave with you, my joy I give unto you," said Jesus. Does this mean that His follower shall not suffer, fail, be defeated, martyred, die? Ask the twelve. No, it means that no power outside a man's self can destroy his equanimity, his poise, his calm of soul. The Raven of black hopelessness, that sits upon the pallid bust of Pallas in a man's soul, comes never from without but from within. If

"His eyes have all the seeming
Of a demon, that is dreaming;
And the lamplight o'er him streaming
Casts his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow
That lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore"—

then be assured, it is myself and not my fate, my maker, my destiny that are in fault. We were made for joy and peace; and if we may not always have joy, then by the grace of God we may always have peace.

Long-suffering, a mellow, a rich fruit; rare, and grown under the glass of careful effort and discipline, very graceful and beautifully tinted.

Kindness, a most luscious and genial variety, indigenous in all climates, increases very rapidly, when once it has taken root; and is far more widely disseminated than most persons realize.

Goodness, by no means an insipid, tasteless fruit, but very hardy, enduring frosts and storms, heat and blight. Some think it is negative; that it never gets anywhere nor accomplishes much. People sometimes say of a man, "He's a good man—a very good man—but—he never does much of anything, nor is of much force." It is false. He is not good unless he is good for something. One who really is a very good man,—for such a one "peradventure some would even dare to die."

Faithfulness. This does not mean full of faith, belief, trust. It means full of devotion to duty, the full discharge of obligation to business, to position, to all one's relations. It gets up early and never retires till the day's stint

is all complete. It does its task so well that it could not do that task better.

Meekness. Surely here is a namby-pamby, milk-and-water, negative fruit, if any. But hardly. Who was the meekest man in the Old Testament? Moses. Look at him smashing the Tables of the Law! See him as Michelangelo conceived him. Rather rugged, is he not? Who was the meekest man in the New Testament? Jesus. Look upon Him duelling with Pharisees and lawyers and defeating them. Look at Him before Pilate—He is the most fearless of men. No, meekness is selflessness; it thinks not of self; that is why it inherits the earth. The man who wants the earth never can get it; the man who does not want it often does get it.

Temperance. We limit this word unfortunately to one only connotation. But there are not only those drunk with wine, but also those drunk with speech, work, play, emotion, nerves, strain, fear, anxiety, ambition, a thousand excesses. This fruit is a specific for inebriety; but the course of treatment is long, and must be patiently sustained.

At the close of this suggestive catalogue of St. Paul's is added the little clause, just as suggestive: "Against such there is no law." Rather odd, is it not? Against such as bear

these fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance,—against such there is no law! Let us look into this.

We have all read in the stories of childhood, or in the myths of ancient peoples, the legend of the charmed life. It was supposed that there were some who bore about with them an amulet, some hidden token, or about whom had been woven some secret spell that was a charm against all evil and all danger. Achilles, you remember, could be wounded in but one small portion of his frame. Macbeth thought that he bore a charmed existence. Joan of Arc was considered invincible and invulnerable; no arrow and no catapult could harm her. Colonel George Washington in the French and Indian wars was supposed, by his enemies, to bear a charmed life; for they repeatedly took deadly aim at him, and could never pierce him; so finally they ceased to fire upon him, saying that he could not be slain.

In these old folklore legends there were supposed to be certain times and seasons especially hallowed when men were safe from baleful influence of spirit, of devil, of hostile force of any kind. And even so late as Shakespeare we find Marcellus, in "Hamlet," on the platform at Elsinore, declaring:

"Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time."

There is truth in this old conception of the charmed life,—God's own truth,—and it can be put into modern scientific terms; indeed, St. Paul does so put it in this little clause: Against such as bear the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, and the rest—against such there is no law.

We live in an age of law and consciousness of law. In fact, law has had its fascination for great thinkers in all times, from Aristotle and St. Paul on down to Huxley and Darwin and the scientists of today. But in no age has the consciousness of law been so universal among the common people as it is today. We know that we live under the influence, under the guardianship, of law, surrounded and hedged in and dominated by law. We know there is no escape from it. We know that it is either with us or against us, according to our own attitude.

Some of us never can forget with what wonder and awe, yes, with what terror and dread, we learned for the first time from our big

brothers, who, we supposed, knew everything in the world, that the atmosphere was pressing upon our small frames fifteen pounds to the square inch. Think of it! Fifteen pounds upon every inch of one's little figure. Why was it that we were not crushed? Why did we not collapse? Why did we not disappear into the ground? It was a long time before we understood that the atmosphere was pressing upon all sides alike, inside and outside, above and below, in front and behind; and that it was that steadfast pressure of the air that was for us, and not against us, that enabled us to stand up and walk, to run and play and live. So the existence of law, as at first we become intensely conscious of it, seems overpowering, awe-inspiring, and terror-striking; but as we grow accustomed to it, we begin to appreciate and to understand that law is with us, and not against us, so long as we are law-abiding.

Now, what is the origin of law? It is in the mind of God. Man never made a law in the history of his being. Man only discovers, finds the law. The law is forever and eternally in the mind and heart of God. Law is God, God is law. We like to say that God is love. Yes, God is the law of love, and no less law for being love. And never for a moment do we

escape from the presence and the operation of His law. It is with us all the time.

Man never made, for example, a natural law; he only discovers it. In his laboratory or in his play with the forces of nature, he discovers that the same cause operating always in the same way produces the same effect; and when he observes it a hundred times, or a thousand times, and there has been no variation from the same sequence of events, he writes it down in a text-book or in his laboratory report and publishes it to the world as a law. He has not made any law. He has simply found out a law.

The same thing is true with reference to statutory law. Men have observed in the course of centuries and millenniums that under certain circumstances, given certain conditions, men will always act toward each other in certain ways, if they act right. Consequently men have come to write down in their statute books that men under certain circumstances, given certain conditions, shall always act so toward each other; and they call it a law. Man has not made the law. He has simply discovered the law of being, of humanity, the law of the moral life. It was Kant, the philosopher, who once declared: "Two things fill me with awe; the starry heavens above, and

within, the moral law." His discovery and contemplation of these two realms of law, outside and inside of him, impressed his soul with wonder and awe.

A man, then, who is law-abiding, whether toward nature or toward his fellow-man, need have no terror of the law; he need not be afraid of it.

One time in a summer cottage the great Thomas Edison was spending his vacation by a certain lake. Every morning from the veranda next door one could look out upon his upper porch and see him sitting there behind the screen of vines, hidden from the passersby going along the boardwalk to and from the water, but easily visible to those upon either side; sitting with his great domed head upon his hands, in meditation, in thought, or in rest. Mentally take off your hat to him every day! Better bare your head before him than before the Tsar of All the Russias, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany, or even King Albert of little Belgium, because he is a greater potentate, a greater benefactor.

They say Thomas Edison can stand in his laboratory, his great laboratory,—his little laboratory,—and there, carefully insulated, can turn loose all round him the force of the electric storm. There is the jagged lightning;

there is the roll of thunder; and he, at the center, plays with it in a sense which Ben Franklin never dreamed of, plays with the storm, safe and unharmed, invulnerable, bearing the charmed life—because he knows the law; and puts himself at the point of safety within the law.

Now, the same thing is true with regard to the moral law. There are eminent jurists, no doubt, without a knowledge of all the laws that are on the statute books of their native States. But they are not afraid of the law. Those men, knowing that ignorance of the law excuses no man, either in nature or society, sit in their office chairs or walk the streets serene and comfortable and unafraid. Why? They are ignorant of part of the law but not afraid, because they know that their lives are in harmony with the spirit of the law, and the law is never a terror to good works. But out yonder along the railroad tracks, there somewhere in the thickets and forests, yonder in the rookeries and slums of the great cities, are men, cringing and afraid, starting at their shadows, uneasy in their sleep and dreams, in terror constantly because they know they have outraged the law. So a man may carry about with him some secret purpose, intent, ambition, cherish some hidden sin within his moral fibre,

which, like a foreign substance in the flesh, like an organism working in the body, creates civil war. Whenever a hostile outside substance comes into this body of ours, immediately the corpuscles of the blood are sent, like an army, to that point; and there a siege begins. The fight is internecine, it is inexorable, it is unending, until either the foreign substance is expelled or the patient dies. That is precisely the attitude in which the offender against his own soul stands. The war is on; the foreign substance is there; and death or freedom must ensue. Either the will must be bowed until it is in harmony with the law, or else the inevitable consequences of the violation of the law must fall.

There are two or three laws which apply to our inner life,—for it is up to that plane that we must lead our thought,—which we may well consider.

There is a law, for example, which St. Paul calls the law of our members. Says he: "I find a law within me, in my body, fighting against the law of my mind, so that what I would do that I cannot, and what I would not that I do."

We saw this beautifully illustrated some years since at the World's Fair in Chicago. No doubt most of us saw the same group of

statuary; for either in plaster, or in photographic reproduction, it was scattered all over the country. Before that group crowds all the while were standing in the course of that exposition. There were two beautiful nude figures wrestling with each other. Their muscles stood out like bands of steel, the nerves and sinews like whipcords on their breasts. Great beads of perspiration coursed down their faces. One was above and one was beneath. The one above seemed to be pressing the one beneath down into the ground. Underneath was written: "I feel two natures struggling within me." The appeal of that group is universal, because we all feel the two natures struggling within us. Identical in outward appearance, they both are we; and which of them is gaining the victory, our spirit or our flesh, is hidden from all but God to know.

Yet this universal conflict, this unending battle which is going on within each of us, can have no terror for the man whose life is hidden with Christ in God. Whoso brings forth the fruits of the spirit,—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, and the rest,—against such there is no law. The laws of this frame with all that they would lead us to,—with the frailties of it, with its weaknesses, with its constantly degenerating character after we have reached the

meridian of life, with all the care that we expend upon it, and the anxiety that it is to us, all the time growing grayer, and shrivelling and withering toward the ground,—can have no terror for the man whose soul is stayed on God. For, after all, it is not the things of the flesh, it is not the material elements by which we are surrounded, it is the inward man that supplies the real life of men. If his thoughts be given to his upper nature, if he cultivates within him whatever is true and beautiful and lovely and of good report, man need never fear for the decay nor the failure nor the fall of the frame.

And once again, there is another and more spiritual law,—for when the Christian passes beyond the childhood of his days in Christ, he wrestles little with his members. There is the law of the mind, which says, he who thinks shall doubt. Early in his religious experience, the young Christian becomes conscious of that law. The more he learns the more he realizes that his old and trusted conceptions are open to doubt and to question. If this is an age of law, it is also an age of doubt. Says Henry van Dyke:

“Its coat of arms is an interrogation point, rampant, above three bishops dormant, and its motto is Query.”

If so, it is a hopeful sign of the times, for the

man who does not doubt, does not think. The man who has his mind made up on all terrestrial and celestial things is the man who has no mind that is worth making up at all. He is fossilized and crystallized. The mind that rests content upon tradition handed down from father and from grandfather, from teacher and from professor, is degenerating toward decay; while every man who for himself explores the foundations of his intellectual beliefs, must begin to question and to doubt.

The present writer one day drove up to a beautiful old Kentucky home, with the owner of it, through a great bluegrass pasture. Off to the right was an Indian mound, nobody knows how old. At the dinner-table that day the following conversation occurred:

"Have you ever dug into that mound?"
This from the guest.

"No." This, laconically, from the host.

"It would be very interesting to know what is inside of it. You might find something very rare, very valuable, a contribution to our historical knowledge. If you did not care for the findings, doubtless the University museum would be very glad of them."

No word from the host. After a pause, the guest opened fire again:

"Don't you intend ever to open it?"

"No."

"May I ask why not?"

"Well, my father didn't open it. His father didn't open it. My great-grandfather didn't open it. And I ain't goin' to open it."

That is Kentucky for you! And perhaps it is also Puritan Massachusetts, Knickerbocker New York, Cavalier Virginia, and many another locality that is neither Puritan, nor Knickerbocker, nor Cavalier.

Prof. William James has said that the trouble with the American people is that they do not think; and that what they need is not more faith, more assurance, more certainty, but more doubt, more inquiry, more thought. He quotes the little boy's definition, "Faith is when you believe something that you know ain't so." It is a far greater crime against the God-given mind of man to try to believe something that you are conscious is not true, than it is openly to say, "I do not believe it, I won't believe it." "There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds," said Tennyson. And then he sanely adds:

"Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!"

So it is a hopeful sign when a young person, or an old person for that matter, begins to say,

"I doubt this," "I doubt that," "I want to investigate that."

This age is an age which does not stop short at the throne of God itself; but asking questions of His world, of His sunshine, of His mountains, of His stars, and of His living creatures, comes to the foot of the great white throne itself, and says to God: "What art Thou?" "Who art Thou?" "What am I?" and "Why hast Thou made me?"

There was one of the disciples who is proverbially called the doubter. After Jesus' resurrection he it was who would not believe, until he had put his finger into the print of the nails and thrust his hand into the wound of the spear in His side. And Jesus said to him, "Come, Thomas, reach forth thy finger and thy hand, and be not faithless, but believing." He spoke with infinite tenderness and appreciation to Thomas, the skeptic. On a certain occasion, farther back in His life, Jesus had turned His face to go up to the city of Jerusalem, and His disciples said to Him: "Master, if you go up to the city at this time you will pay for it with your life. You know that the Pharisees are lying in wait for you to take you." But He set His face like flint to go to the city of Jerusalem. Then said Thomas, "Come, let us also go with Him,

that we may die with Him." Commend me to that kind of skeptic, the man who does not understand his Lord, the man to whom Jesus Christ is a mystery that he never will solve, and knows he never will solve; yet who so loves Jesus Christ, that he says, "Come, let me go with him, that I may die with him." Against such there is no law; against a man who puts his hand into the hand of Christ and gives his will to the will of Christ, against him there is no law of doubt that can prevail. His inquiry will but lead him to the light, where he can cry in the clearness and the splendor of his vision, "My Lord and my God!" He bears the charmed life.

Then once more, there is the old, old law of sorrow, as old as Job and older. Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. Man is born to evil as the sparks to fly upward. Is there evil in the city and the Lord hath not done it? Is there any life lived under the blue that has not had its days of grief and distress and pain? Sorrow is the universal heritage of the race. It is a law, just as inexorable as the laws of nature by which we are hedged in and with which we are surrounded. None of us escapes from it.

Sir Edwin Arnold, in his "Light of Asia," tells how Buddha sleeps in his beautiful palace

while silver-stringed lyres are placed in the windows; so that the soft zephyrs of the night can blow over them and lull to sleep the prince and his consort and household. And this is the message which comes over the silver strings to the ears of the restless, uneasy Buddha:

“We are the voices of the wandering wind,
Which moan for rest, and rest can never find;
Lo! as the wind is, so is mortal life:
A moan, a sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife.”

Into each life some rain must fall,—yes, and some hail and some thunderbolts. Lives are riven and torn all round us; and nobody knows when the lightning may strike him or his. What shall we think and do in the face of this inexorable law? Make answer that against the life that is hidden with Christ in God, the life that brings forth the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance, there is no law of sorrow that can prevail. We know it is true. Over and over again have we seen lives that have been given into His keeping bowed and twisted and torn, as by the electric storm, cleft as by the lightning, and still firm and strong as if rooted into the rock.

There was a widow in my church in a cer-

tain city, nearly twenty years ago, who had three sons, and she toiled hard to send two of these boys to college, as they wished to prepare for the Christian ministry. They were at home for the summertime, and they went out to bathe in the little stream that flows upon three sides of that inland town. The youngest boy, unable to swim, suddenly got beyond his depth, and cried out for help. The eldest brother plunged in to aid him. Unable to swim, he also began to cry for help. Then the second brother leaped to the aid of the others. All three were struggling in the water. Somehow, the little one managed to scramble out; but the other two, the college boys, were drowned. Her pastor sat with that widow through the long watches of that night as she rocked back and forth in a white and tearless agony. He followed that double procession to the cemetery. And again, as the weeks and months went by, he watched the widow's face, as in her accustomed place she sat in the sanctuary. Her hair visibly whitened; her face was deeper and deeper lined with the furrows of her irreparable loss; and yet it seemed to him as if that face shone like the face of an angel. She is living there yet, and the little fellow is now preaching the gospel of the Son of God.

That is but one out of many instances that

come under a pastor's observation in which men and women are shaken by what seems unbearable grief; and yet stand firm. A life that is given in keeping to God, a life the will of which flows in harmony with the will of God—you cannot obliterate, you cannot destroy that life, for God made it, and it is eternal. Against such there is no law in God's mind, nor out of God's mind, which is the seat of all law, that can prevail. We cannot know all the law. We know very little about the law of God in nature or in man. We are just beginning to think His thoughts over after Him. We know very little of the statutory law upon the books of the nations and in the usages of men. We know very little of the moral law within us. We are just learning the A B C's of the invariable, unchangeable law that the Hebrews wrote in stone. We know very little about the laws of our members, the laws of our mind, and the laws of the creation. But we do know this, that as sure as God lives He has made no law that is against us, if our wills but flow in harmony with His own. Ignorance of the law may excuse none, but if the man's will be right, the law is with him, and not against him—he bears the Charmed Life.

IX

HOW ARE THE SCRIPTURES INSPIRED?

THIS rapid attempt at a résumé of the popular thought of our time would not be halfway complete without some attention paid to the place of the Bible in modern thought. The average man does not read the book as much as he formerly did; but nevertheless he is thinking about it some, is jealous for it.

We may well long for the old days when our fathers under the shade of the trees, by the furrows at noon, took out their little dog-eared Testaments, and snatched a few hasty passages, or by the open fire at night reached down the great old family Bible and read to the household, expounded, and pondered it. We have not their incentive—controversy. We should hardly desire the restoration of the latter, but we should greatly profit by the return of the Book. The first-best place for the Bible is in the soul, the next in the mind, the next in the pocket.

But this age, so accustomed to ask questions, has been interrogative about the Bible; it has almost if not quite reached its conclusion; perhaps it may be worth while to outline what it has been thinking and still is thinking concerning this important issue.

Some twenty-odd years ago in the Boston theater one might have heard Col. Robert Ingersoll, as he stepped to the front of the platform, with that peculiar nervous gesture of his, say, "Since nobody else will tell the truth about the Bible, I'm going to tell it!" when, at that very moment, scarce three miles away, men were living in an institution, giving days and nights—years—their lives—to finding out the truth about the Bible, and telling and publishing it. He was surrounded with pulpits where ministers, unafraid, were speaking the truth as they saw it, concerning the Bible, and all religious subjects. Colonel Ingersoll was merely taking the results of the then new critical study, and taking them very superficially, from the institutions of learning, and distorting and twisting them to suit the purposes which he had in hand. He was no scholar; he was simply an accomplished speaker.

There is no earthly reason why any one should not tell the truth about the Bible, as

far as he sees it and knows it, with just as much freedom as Colonel Ingersoll or any materialist or rationalist whomsoever. We have the utmost liberty to speak the truth without reservation or equivocation, confident in the reception of the truth, as it is given us to see the truth, in the spirit in which it is spoken. The truth is mighty, and will prevail; and nobody ever needs to fear the truth. Sometimes it is shadowed and shaded and obscured, but it comes to the light, ultimately; and truth, and truth alone, can triumph. Falsehood always dies.

The word "inspiration" is taken from two Latin words which mean "to breathe into"; and when we speak of an inspired document, we mean that the breath of divinity has been breathed into it; just as the breath of God was breathed into the clay, and it became a living soul. Any way you care to put it—by evolution or by whatever process man came into being—the divine breath was breathed into him and he became a living soul. Now, when the truth is breathed into a book, it becomes "inspired." It is inspired by the inbreathing of the Spirit of God. So much for the etymology and definition of the word.

Now, in just what fashion are these books

of the Scripture, so-called, breathed into, inspired with the breath of God?

There have been three answers made to that question. There is, first, the answer that these books were dictated by God; that they are the result of dictation to an amanuensis, or to amanuenses. There is the second answer, that these books are just like any other books, inspired as any other books are inspired, and only so inspired. There is the third answer, that these books are peculiarly inspired, differently from any other books; more intensely; more profoundly; inspired in a degree in which no other books in the world have ever been inspired. Those are the three possible positions that may be assumed with regard to the inspiration of Sacred Scripture.

First of all, the theory of dictation. It is, that God used men, as channels through whom should flow His words; that these amanuenses wrote down what God put into their hearts to write; in other words, that God made a revelation by means of the pens of certain men, or by means of the tongues of certain men, and that revelation has been handed down to us through the centuries, in this written form. The Book of Mormon is supposed so to have been handed down. It was found, we are told, by Joseph Smith, the prophet, hidden away in

the woods, buried in the earth, and printed upon gold leaves. It was dictated, signed, sealed and delivered, once and for all, in the form in which he found it. Such was his conception of the revelation of God, contained in his sacred book.

How does this idea of the revelation of our Scriptures bear the tests? How did this theory come to arise? Possibly we shall get some answer, through tracing its origin in history. The theory is only about four centuries old. It originated in the sixteenth century, in the time of the Reformation. The protestants against the Catholic Church felt that they must have some infallible authority which they could erect over against the infallible authority of the Church and the pope; consequently, gradually, in the development of Protestantism, the Bible was taken as the only possible infallible authority that could be found to oppose the pope and the Church. Martin Luther, himself, did not hold to the theory of the inerrancy of Scripture. He speaks, for instance, of the Epistle of St. James as "an epistle of straw—a rope of sand," and he speaks of the Galatian letter, on the other hand, as his "wife," his Katherine von Bora, because he kept it by him night and day. But the reformers, gradually,

since the time of Luther, have erected the Bible to its seat of infallible authority.

Now, God may have given us the Bible in that way; but it does not seem entirely reasonable to the modern mind that He did. The fact is, it is doubtful if a reader of this page believes in the dictation-theory of the origin of Sacred Scripture. The individual would say: "No, I do not believe it, just in that way. I think the Book is infallible, but not dictated." Where can you draw the line of distinction, then, between the two? If it is infallible, every word of it, every dotting of every "i," and every crossing of every "t," must be infallible. It, then, must be dictated, authorized word by word, letter by letter, from God; otherwise the theory of infallibility must crumble to the ground. That is the logic of the situation. And then even if men do not agree that they believe in the theory of dictation, they nevertheless act as if they believed so, when they say: "This and this is true, because I find it in the Bible. So and so is the case, because the Bible says so. I must have a thus-saith-the-Lord, or I will not do this or that. I must have a prescription in the Book, itself, or I will not have an organ in the church. I must find missionary societies spoken of in actual words in the New Testament, or there shall be

no missionary organization in the church. The Bible says nothing about violins, therefore we cannot have a violin obligato played in our choir." You see where the logic of that attitude brings us. We must have exact specifications for everything, if we are going to hold to the theory of infallibility.

But God does not work in that way, does He? If He had wanted to, no doubt, He could have put His finger down upon the plains of Colorado, and there, instead of the rough and jagged Rocky Mountains, He could have made beautiful, symmetrical pyramids, with steps adapted to the feet of man, or with spiral roadways, adapted to the railroads and the automobiles of man. He could have made those pyramids, just as polished and as regular as the pyramids of Cheops and Kephren. He could have burrowed through them, if He cared to, channels through which the traffic of man could have passed so much more easily than it can pass over those jagged, inaccessible summits. If God had cared to, He could have made the water flow uphill, so that it could be delivered in the third stories of our houses, without difficulty and without effort upon our part. But He does not work against His law of gravitation. If God cared to, He could have painted the sky, day and night, with all the

roseate colors with which He painted it at six o'clock yesterday afternoon, when He hung the evening star in the west. If He had cared to, what could He not have done? But, instead of that, He has given us a tough world, a hard world, a rugged and a rocky world, a world dominated by law, with the obstinacy of Nature, and with the apparently futile efforts of mankind dashing themselves to pieces against the elements of His law. He has chosen that method by which to refine and to polish and to toughen and to develop man; and, in somewhat the same fashion, perhaps He has put against the mind of man problems to solve, difficulties to unravel, perplexities to endure, and enemies to conquer. Truth comes only by effort. Truth handed down to us, signed, sealed and delivered, is milk to the babe—not food to the man. The childhood of the race and the childhood of the human intellect may often demand infallible guides; but not so the full-grown race of men.

The theory of the infallibility of the Sacred Scriptures, the theory of dictation, of the reformers, has been valuable in the world. It has done its work. It has helped to preserve many of the institutions and many of the ideals contained within the Book. In the same fashion, the infallibility of the Church

and of the pope has served a valuable purpose in the world, for it held together, during the Dark Ages, the nucleus of Christianity and the Kingdom of God; it preserved these selfsame Scriptures; continued, in the mass, the memorial feast of the Last Supper of Our Lord. Both these infallibilities have had their day,—

“Have had their day, and ceased to be,
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, oh Lord, art more than they.”

It is just as evident, upon careful scrutiny of the facts concerning these Scriptures, that God did not follow the pyramidal form of dictation, as it is upon careful scrutiny of Nature that God did not give the world to us just simply to ease our paths.

What are some of these facts? First, then, with regard to the canon. The Scriptures did not exist in the form and number in which we have them now, until the fourth century after Christ. The number of books to be gathered into the Old Testament was not determined until the end of the first Christian century; and the number of books to be gathered into the New was not determined until our Lord had passed from the earth nearly four hundred years.

In every synagogue-chest was a number of

rolls, each containing one book of the Old Testament. Now one was used, now another. These were of varying value, and uncertain status; and custom gradually set its seal upon the chosen books. Just why a love-poem like the Song of Solomon was included, and a heroic history like that of the Maccabees was left out, is difficult to determine.

In like manner, in every early Christian church, there was a number of rolls, each a gospel, or an epistle, or an apocalypse. One church possessed one or more gospels, another a different one or different ones; one had certain of Paul's epistles, another had others; one had the letter of St. James, another that of St. Barnabas; one had the revelation of St. John, another that of Enoch. These were not all collected, sifted, and compounded into the present collection until late in the fourth century after Christ. Undoubtedly it is true that, in the case of the Christian Scriptures, the selection was wisely made; though it is a great pity that at least one of Paul's letters was allowed to perish.

Again, the text of the books is still open to considerable question; and doubtless it will never be finally and definitely determined. The inspired, infallible dictated book—what is it? The King James Version? Is it the Revised

Version? Is it the Westcott and Hort Greek Testament? Or is it the Tischendorf Greek Testament? Is it Wycliffe's Bible? Tindal's Bible? Luther's Bible? Whose Bible is it that is to be the final, absolute, infallible, dictated authority? There are no manuscripts of the New Testament older than the fourth century after Christ, and which one of the manuscripts—for they differ in their readings—is to be the final and infallible, dictated manuscript, handed down from God? Is it to be the Codex Sinaiticus, the one that Tischendorf found in the monastery of Sinai? Or, is it to be the Alexandrian manuscript? Or, is it to be the Vatican manuscript, in the Vatican library? Is it to be one of those three great capital manuscripts? Or, is it to be one of the one hundred and twenty or so cursive, running-hand manuscripts? Which is the final text? Experts cannot tell. The most learned men that have given their lives to this question of the text of the New Testament differ; their readings do not agree.

No, that apparently is not God's way of working. He does not seem to work by pyramids, but mountains. He does not work by geometrical designs. He does not work by up-setting laws. He "works in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." He takes the mind

of man and uses it for all that it is worth to develop the soul of man that is within.

Now, as to the second idea of inspiration. Men, swinging away from bondage to a conception like that of the dictated Bible—a bondage which, after all, puts a burden upon the soul of man that neither we nor our fathers could bear; a bondage from which he does well who sets us free—I say, swinging to the opposite extreme, men say: “Why, the Bible is no more inspired than any other book. It is just like Shakespeare. It is just like Al Koran. It is just like the sayings of Confucius. It is like Goethe. It is like Milton. It is like Dante. It is like Browning. It is inspired, as these great writers are inspired, and only as these great writers are inspired.” We may well believe in the inspiration of Shakespeare, in the inspiration of Dante, in the inspiration of Goethe, and of the Koran, and of Confucius. Shall we say that, when Shakespeare tells us “all the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players,” he is giving us no truth, handed down to us from God? When Shakespeare pictures for us Hamlet and his hesitancy, holding as it were a mirror up to nature for so many of us, shall we say that there is no truth of God given to us by the great Bard of Avon? When

Confucius gives us the Golden Rule five centuries before Jesus uttered it, shall we say that Jesus was inspired when He declared it, and Confucius was not? When the Koran keeps hundreds of millions of Turks and Persians and Egyptians temperate, drinking no wine, shall we say that the Koran has no inspiration in it? These books have divine truth in them, messages from God to men.

There is, however, a double test by which the profundity of inspiration can be sounded: How much truth? How much needed truth? Those two questions—there is the test of inspiration, is it not? and the only test, and the final test.

If it is true, it is of God. Wherever truth is, it comes from God. Whoever finds truth gets it from God, gives it to men, is the herald of God, as the channel through which God's spirit flows. Is it Winchell, with his geological hammer? Does he give truth? Then it comes from God. Is it Darwin, with his biological investigations? If he gives truth, it comes from God. Is it the great dramatist, picturing a Shylock, a Portia, a Macbeth, a King Lear? Does he give truth? It comes from God. Is it Confucius teaching reverence for age, kindness to parents? It is just as true as the commandment, "Thou shalt honor thy

father and thy mother." Wherever the truth is, it is God's truth; and whencesoever the truth comes, it comes from God; and the question simply is, What is the quantity of truth? What is the degree of truth? Thus you test a document as to its inspiration.

How much truth does Confucius give? Does he give enough to make a modern civilization? Does he give enough to make peace? Happiness? Does he give enough to cleanse the gutters, and to send the streams of clear water, to save and not to destroy the lives of men? Does he give enough, in this scientific age, to eradicate germs, micro-organisms, just as fast as science teaches us to do it? If he gives that truth—that practical truth—then it is directly of God. But we find no documents, anywhere, that give the amount of truth, and needed truth, that we find in these books of Sacred Scripture. Take all the scientists; take all the religionists; take all the philosophers, the poets, and the litterateurs—have they the amount of truth, and the kind of truth, that the soul of man is hungry and thirsty after, contained in the Sacred Scripture? If so, then they are inspired just as these books are inspired. If not, they are not.

Now, a rapid survey of these books. There are, in the Old Testament, certain historical

books, giving us a beautiful and naïve and highly literary account of creation, that has not been surpassed by Milton, or Dante, or Darwin, or any of the rest; and then there follow a set of laws, adapted to the age, admirably adapted to the age, in which they were given, some six centuries before Christ. Then there comes devotional literature, psalms, Job, and the like, that still have not been surpassed, as the utterances of the soul striving to express itself to God. Then, the sermons and orations of great statesmen like Isaiah, and Jeremiah, Amos, and Hosea, also adapted to the age in which they were spoken, and the difficulties under which the nation was then laboring.

Then, closing the book of the Old Testament, which has been superseded, just as Jesus closed the book in the Synagogue and sat down to talk, and just as He said, over and over, "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, but, verily I say unto you," here are the first four gospels; and is there any literature in the world that could take the place of them? The Epistles of St. Paul, and the Acts of the Apostles—can you find the same amount of truth, and the truth needed, anywhere else in the world, as in these books? If you were placed upon a desert

island, to live the rest of your life as an Alexander Selkirk, what book would you choose to go with you? Shakespeare? Very precious. We love to turn his pages, before the fire on winter nights, and go with his great characters, stalking across the stage of the world. Would it be Robert Louis Stevenson?—appropriate for a desert island. Dante? Beautiful. Would it be Milton with his song “never yet attempted in prose or rhyme”? Not Milton. Could we live and die with Al Koran? or with the classics of Confucius? or with the songs of Veda? with the Sankhya or Vedanta of India? None of these. If you had to live alone; if you had to die alone; if you had to front the hardness of Nature alone; if you had to fight the rest of the fight of life, unaided and alone; if you had to die in the darkness, you would say, “Give me these four books—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John!” And if you had to take one of them, perhaps you would take John; and would cling to it as to a life raft in a stormy sea. What other book could you take, for life and death?

The Bible is not inspired, then, just as Shakespeare. There is not the same sort of inspiration. This leads to the third possible position, and that is, that these books are inspired as other books are, but more so; that the

difference is so great in degree that it amounts to a difference in kind.

That is ground upon which our feet can rest, and rest satisfactorily. It gives freedom, and it gives assurance. It gives liberty to think for one's self, and to move for one's self in the world of spirit; and at the same time it gives a rock upon which to stand.

Let us illustrate it in this way: All men are divine, but Jesus is more divine than any man, or all men. There is not a man so degraded that has not the spark of divinity somewhere in his soul. Underneath the callus of materialism, of sordidness, of wickedness, of shame and sinfulness, every man has at least a divine spark. That much, this age firmly believes. Sometimes that spark is fanned into a flame, and we see men in whom divinity shines; men whose lives, whose actions, whose very faces are aflame with the presence of God in their souls. But we see no man so divine as Jesus Christ. He is unique. He is in a class all by himself. He is to us the picture of God, the express revelation of the Father. He is so divine as to be different in kind. We can, then, speak of the *divineness* of man, but the *divinity* of Christ.

Now, in precisely the same way there are, of books that have any truth in them, with a

spark of inspiration, some books that are more inspired than other books. The spark is sometimes fanned into a rich, beautiful flame, and they glow with the presence of God. But these sacred books—these Scriptures—are so inspired with such unique truth, and needed truth, and so much truth and needed truth, that their inspiration amounts to a difference in kind.

Does that satisfy the mind? Some one says, then, immediately, "If that is the case, how am I going to separate between truth and error in a book which you confess is fallible?" There will be no difficulty about that. We do not go to these books to study astronomy; we do not come here to study geology; we do not come to these books to study biology. For these we go to scientists, to their laboratories, and the latest pamphlets issued from the laboratories. We come here after a certain kind of truth; not after history, simply, but after the truth that the hungry, thirsty soul needs—the truth that makes for righteousness.

There is no difficulty about the soul recognizing the truth, and dividing between what is necessary and unnecessary truth, what is valuable and valueless truth. We take, for example, the writings of St. Paul. Does the most conservative modern churchman accept all of

them? Indubitably not. Even the man who claims that the book is infallible, inspired, letter by letter, word by word, does not take the writings of St. Paul at their face value, and obey them. He lets his wife come to church and sit beside him, without a veil across her face, which St. Paul expressly forbade. He lets his wife go to prayer meeting and stand up and talk in prayer meeting, which St. Paul expressly forbade. He goes and marries him a wife, which St. Paul said was not an expedient thing to do. St. Paul was writing for that age. A Christian woman, surrounded by veiled women, who should take away the veil from off her face would have made herself conspicuous and offensive in the community. A Christian woman who should stand up in the meetings of that day and talk would have been an offence to all the heathen and the Jews about her; and St. Paul forbade it. He expected the second coming of our Lord so soon, that he thought marriage inexpedient, both for himself and for others. How, again, are we to reconcile the fact that in his early letters Paul urged the churches to prepare for the immediate coming of the Lord, and in the later letters, such as first and second Timothy, and Titus, he had given up the expectation of the immediate advent?

We should be, if obeying the letter of the New Testament Scriptures, washing each others' feet today. It is just as expressly commanded as Christian baptism or the Lord's Supper. One cannot get around it; for, on that same last night in which he ordained the Lord's Supper, our Saviour took a basin, and girded Himself with a towel, and went from disciple to disciple, and washed their feet; and He said, "If your Lord and Master wash your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." The literalist cannot get away from that. If we are going to fulfil every iota of the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us join the sect which washes feet, and go at it.

No, the mind can accept the truth, and the needed truth; the mind can divide; the soul of man recognizes the truth when he sees it, and the truth when he needs it. The soul has an infinite right to truth. The soul has a kinship for the truth. The soul knows the truth when it meets it in the street, in the market, in the home, in the forest, and in the field. They—truth and the soul—belong together. They rush together as the particles of mercury upon a table run and flow one into the other. The human soul is practically infallible, in its recognition of the truth and the needed truth; and when you ask the question, "How am I to

draw the line between historical accuracy and inaccuracy? How am I to know whether the genealogy of Matthew is correct, or whether the genealogy of Luke is correct?" you are distrusting your own intellect; you are simply saying to yourself, "I am helpless in the face of apparent contradiction; I don't know what to accept; I don't know what to do." Trust yourself! Trust your soul! Trust your mind! Your mind and soul will recognize the truth needed, and grasp it, and accept it. For other things you need not care.

What is this truth that our souls need, that we find here, and do not find in Confucius, nor the Koran, nor the Vedantas, nor the Shakespeares, nor the Dantes, nor the Miltons? It is immortality and eternal life, brought to light through Jesus Christ in His gospel; it is salvation, redemption from sin and the weight of it and the consciousness of it, that every one of us bears; it is God manifest in the face of Jesus Christ—God, for whom the soul thirsts as the hart pants for the water-brooks. It is the love of God, taught by the Christ when in the world. It is the fatherhood of God, that Jesus and nobody else has ever taught. It is the brotherhood of fellow-men, that Jesus and nobody else has ever proclaimed. These are the truths, and the needed truths, that this

book, and this book alone, brings. We cannot live, and we cannot die, without it!

It is a well-worn old story, that Walter Scott, who himself had written so many beautiful songs and books, when at last his hour came to die, and he knew it, said, "Son, bring me the Book"; and his son said, "What book, father? Do you mean Homer?" "No." "Do you mean Virgil?" "No." Scott loved to read these ancient classics. "Do you mean Shakespeare?" "No." "What book, father?" Scott said: "My son, there is only one Book. Bring me The Book—The Bible!" And when he got it, he put his head upon it. He could not read it any more, but he laid his head upon that book, to die.

It is for us to plant our feet upon that Book, to live, to stand; it is for us to fold it to our hearts to die.

X

THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE

EVER the phrase "Endless Life" is powerful; it divides humanity into two opposing camps, one yearning for immortality, one desirous of the sleep that knows no waking. Just as half the globe is bathed in sunlight, and the other half covered with night, so, roughly speaking, does half of the human race desire and expect an endless life, and the other half yearn for and look forward to extinction. In general, the West looks for life and the East hopes for death. And whether

"East is East and West is West,
And never the twain shall meet,
Till earth and sky stand presently
At God's great judgment seat!"

is true or false; whether the two shall meet and mingle in this present world or not; certain it is that they are very far apart at this hour regarding many things, not the least of which is the question of the future life. There

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is considerable difference of opinion as to just what is the teaching, for example, of Buddha upon this subject; but the statements just made are, nevertheless, fairly safe.

When St. Paul, on the Areopagus, reached, in his discourse, the expression, "the resurrection from the dead," his auditors would listen no further; they laughed him out of court; his message was snapped off like the thread of fate. So repugnant was the idea of resurrection to a Greek that he could not listen with tolerance to one who set it forth. Buddha taught millions of people that the passage through life after life, in a long chain of bondage to the flesh, might, by persistent virtue, ultimately be terminated by absorption into the infinite and the loss of personal identity. This was the consummation devoutly to be wished. So with many others of the Sacred Teachers of the East.

On the other hand, for at least two thousand years, the Western World has longed for life, endless life; hoped for life, endless life. It has felt its inability to prove that future; and at this hour there is no question upon which the ordinary man is more doubtful and hesitant and upon which he is so anxious for knowledge. In his hour of need, the hope reaches him, and touches and kindles his heart. Mr.

Ingersoll again, in the finest of the many fine words he uttered,—the little one minute speech at his brother's burial in Washington,—has this to say:

“Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights, we cry aloud; and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead, there comes no word. But in the night of death, hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing.”

When death touched his own home, hope and the star appeared. That hope was planted by Him who spoke as man never spake; and His words once uttered will not down.

Half the fear of death is due to the law of self-preservation. We are made to save our lives and not to throw them away. If this instinct were not in us, we should, too often, our quietus make with a bare bodkin. Dr. Reifsnider, the president of St. Paul's College in Tokio, is authority for the statement, quoted in the Associated Press, that five per cent of the Japanese students today are committing suicide. One college is located near a cataract and one near a crater. Guards are kept constantly about these, and still the young men slip past the military cordon, and throw themselves over

the one or into the other. Five per cent! Fancy the furore if this should take place in America! Five per cent of the students of a single great State University would be one hundred and fifty to three hundred a year. Five per cent in all America would be possibly ten thousand. Half an army corps of young officers—not enlisted men! The president of St. Paul's should be good authority; and he claims that this awful sacrifice of precious life is due to the loss of all religious belief. Even Buddhism would hold out hope enough to prevent this destruction, but Buddhism is fast losing in Japan. It must be deep hopelessness, indeed, that thus can overcome the inherent, natural dread of death.

The other half of the fear of death is due to its mystery. "Who would fardels bear, to grunt and sweat under a weary life, but that the dread of something after death, the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns, puzzles the will and makes us rather bear those ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of?" Ignorance is always the mother of fear.

Yet why dread the mysterious? Birth is equally and beautifully mysterious. Religion is mysterious. Life is mysterious. He would do well who should set us free from that dread

of death which is due to mystery. Maurice Maeterlinck has a beautiful little essay on the subject in which he reaches the conclusion that pain, distress, uncertainty, all these belong to life not death, and that in itself death can neither be painful, distressing, nor anxious. Nature gives her merciful anæsthetic. Further he concludes that whatever the future holds, it cannot be bad, it must be good. Charles Frohman will long be remembered for his last words, spoken on the sinking *Lusitania*, "Death is life's most beautiful adventure."

Shall we never reach the time when we shall say good-bye to those who embark upon that adventure, even as friends who assemble at the pier and wave adieus to loved ones going on a pleasant voyage? Tears may flow at the separation, for that we too are not embarking, but mingled with the gentle sadness shall there not be joy for the beloved, sailing away into the sunlit, summer seas?

And the first five minutes after death! Can imagination picture it? Is it like the awakening from an anæsthetic? One comes tumbling down out of the dark, floating down;—out of the dark, into the light; the glimmering square grows gradually light. Even the gnawing, numbing pain cannot overcome the intoxication of growing consciousness and the welcome

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beauty of faces and the world. No, it is hardly like this. There cannot be so much of shock and distress. God shall wipe away all tears. It shall be like the awakening from healthful sleep to happy sunlight.

But let us be careful not to let our imaginations run away. Let us ask the common man in the street what he thinks, what he believes; and then let us try to set it down.

He does not believe in the resurrection of the body. He does not believe in a literal hell of fire and devils. He does not believe in an eternity of punishment for any mortal. So much for the negative.

He does believe in personal immortality. He does believe in swift and sure reformatory punishment for sin. He does believe in the ultimate prevalence and triumph of righteousness and the cleansing of the whole universe from all that is evil and wrong. So much for the affirmative.

That, in a nutshell, is the current, popular belief. It may not be yours, but it is that of your neighbor, if he would speak it out. You have a right to yours. You may differ from him, and you have as good a right to think as you do, as he has to think as he does. Let us compare the ideas.

First of all, he believes in personal immor-

tality beyond the grave, not in the survival of the body in the resurrection. Consequently, he is unable to repeat literally that clause in the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the resurrection of the body." It seems scientifically impossible that this body should survive; and it seems highly undesirable that this body should be saddled upon one and bound round one's spirit through all the reaches of eternity. We should dislike very much to go into the other world with this ailing, this decaying, this crippled frame. We want to go there with what Paul calls a celestial body freed from danger and distress and limitation. So, we believe that the spirit survives, and not this chemical combination.

Does the man in the street believe, then, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ? Yes, but not in the permanence of the body of Jesus Christ. Now, we do not know very much about His resurrection. We can speculate; and we can read the accounts as they are given. But we do not know what became of that body. It is inconceivable that, after three days' chemical change which, according to natural law, we know goes on in the stagnant blood and lymph and tissues of a lifeless form, that body could, without contravention of divine law, be restored in a moment's time. God does not seem

to act in that way. That Jesus Christ arose from the dead, the common man is thoroughly convinced; that in some form or other, we know not what, He appeared to His disciples, he firmly believes; that He showed them the nail prints in His hands and the spear wound in His side; but that at the same time He passed through closed doors and appeared suddenly in the midst,—these things also he believes. That he is alive today, we all know, and for ever more alive. Yes, the ordinary man believes in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the resurrection of you, of himself. But these bodies of ours must return to the dust whence they came,—earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

It seems also equally inconceivable that the spirit of man should ever be quenched. We know we cannot prove either the one statement, or the other. It is impossible for anybody to prove the immortality of the soul. None of the philosophers and theologians have ever succeeded in doing it. They have tried, with all the ingenuity and all the genius at their command, and there has been no final demonstration, conclusive, like a mathematical theorem fully set forth, of personal immortality. There are certain arguments, certain indications, certain intimations, which point the way toward

that conclusion; but there has been no final proof.

The universal hope of man has been pointed out as a possible proof of the immortality of the soul; but we have first to take into consideration, as has already been suggested, that the hope for immortality is far from universal. A large portion of the human race desires nothing so much as extinction. The whole Hindu world, it is fairly safe to say, is seeking with the most earnest yearning for disappearance, for the grave that knows no waking, for the extinction of all life; and there are at least three hundred millions of those Hindus. No; the hope is not universal, and it has not always been even an idea in the minds of men and women.

The fact is that the Hebrew Scriptures, for the most part, have nothing to say about immortality and eternal life. In the Old Testament there is only a foreglimpse here and there, to indicate that the people of Israel has even thought of such a possibility.

In all the literature of the Greeks, who were the teachers of antiquity, who gave their philosophy, their learning, and their intellectual attitude to Rome,—Rome which conquered the Greeks, and then in turn was conquered by them,—in all Greek literature there is scarcely

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a word indicating any certitude of hope in immortality. We find Homer in one place putting it into the mouth of Achilles, in the realm of the departed, to say:

“ ‘Talk not of reigning in this dolorous gloom,
Nor think,’ he said, ‘vain words can ease my doom.
Better by far a weight of woes to bear,
And in affliction breathe the vital air,
Slave to the meanest hind that begs his bread,
Than reign the sceptred monarch of the dead.’ ”

Poor ghost! A sad outlook for a great King among shades.

Pindar has a little passage in his odes concerning the golden islands of the blest. But these were reserved only for the few. For the great multitude of departed Greeks, there was no hope of any existence beyond the grave.

It is only within the last twenty centuries, or thereabout, that there has been any wide expectation of immortality—certainly, any deeply grounded hope of immortality—or any abiding conviction that, if a man dies, he shall live again. So the argument derived from universal hope falls to the ground.

Modern science, however, helps us with certain indications. It has taught us all as children in the public school that nothing that is ever made goes out of existence. We call this, in our text-books, the law of conservation of

matter and of the conservation of force. Matter may change. The wood in this desk may decay; but the particles of which it is made will still be in existence. You may burn this wood up into smoke, but the particles go into the smoke and into the ashes and into the gases that are given off. Every atom of it is there when the process of disintegration has been completed.

Now, if that is true in the physical world—true of matter—true of force, of heat, of electricity—may it not be equally true—is it not likely that it is equally true—of that mysterious, intangible, unknown substance or force which constitutes the soul, the inner life of man? Many men have gradually come to believe in the conservation of spirit as well as in the conservation of matter and of force.

But there is no proof in anything Sir Oliver Lodge has said—no proof in the experiments of the psychological laboratories, or the societies for psychical research. We cannot prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that, if a man dies, he shall live again; but we believe it. Most of us cannot help but believe it, since Jesus came and taught it. Absorption in materialism, a condition steeped in crime and sin, utter despair of one's self and of life, may lead a man to an opposite conviction. But for the

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most part, we believe it, whether we can prove it or not. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said :

“I am sorry if I have been betrayed into saying anything that requires proof.”

There are certain things in which we believe in spite of ourselves, knowing perfectly well that we cannot demonstrate them. We believe in God, and nobody can prove God. We believe in eternal life, and nobody can demonstrate it.

Our ground of belief in immortality is, then, the word of Jesus Christ. We believe in it because He told us we might and should. “Ah then,” says one, “you are returning to a religion of authority. You are subjecting the reason. You are accepting something on mere authority.” Not at all. The reason tells us that Jesus knew what He was talking about, while nobody else ever has known anything about this subject. He was so sane, so calm, so sure in His utterance here; and all else that He ever uttered was also so sane, so calm, so sure; and all has been so amply weighed and tested by two thousand years of experience, that He could not have been mistaken on this, a subject so vital to our peace of mind.

Now, for the second question, concerning the character of that future life, concerning reward and punishment. The man in the street

does not believe in the literal hell—the lake of fire, the brimstone, the steel trident, the demon with hoofs and horns and forked tail. At all events, he rarely believes in it for himself, his wife, or his sons. He may think he believes in it for some other man, his wife, or his sons.

Let us have no inclination to deal with this matter lightly; but let us be perfectly frank in stating that all that material view is a myth; it is not justified by the Scriptures. If there are people who are aggrieved because we do not believe in a literal hell, we are sorry that they are aggrieved. If we disturb them by our declaration that we do not believe in a personal devil, we are sorry that they cannot get along without the devil; but we do not find these things in our Bible, as we read it and understand it and interpret it. But we do read of the literal hell in Dante's "*Inferno*," in Milton's "*Paradise Lost*"; and unconsciously, whether we have ever read these poems or not, we have woven their imagery into the warp and woof of our English thought,—yes, of European thought,—until today we think it is in the Holy Scriptures. There is only a chapter or two in Matthew, toward the close, which can even be bent and twisted to justify such material and literal conceptions of hell—Oriental language, easily understood by Orientals, but

easily misconstrued by hard-headed, literal Westerners.

It stands to reason that if we do not have this body after a few years, but pass out into a spiritual existence, we cannot be tormented with fire; we cannot be pulled at with pincers; we cannot be stretched upon a gridiron. We shall have no nerves and sinews and muscles to be tormented and burned and stretched. A literal hell may play its part in the unfolding, developing life of a child or a childlike race of people; but it cannot influence or affect mature, sober-minded, thoughtful men and women. A colored preacher last winter, in discussing this subject with the author, said that he had to preach hell to his people. "Why," he said, "if I don't preach hell to my people, you would not have any clothes on your lines or chickens in your coops." So the doctrine may serve its purpose, may "function serviceably" amongst a childlike people; but it is only a hindrance, a shackle about the feet of a full-grown man or nation.

But for all that, we believe in a hell. For all that, we believe in swift and sure punishment for sin. We have felt it. We have been in it. We have seen it. The so-called generous sins, the sins of the flesh,—the appetites and desires of men when carried to excess,—bring

every one of them its punishment, visibly, clearly, plainly, and invariably. There never was any one of these appetites and desires given to men that was not intended for legitimate use. There never was any apple in any Garden of Eden or elsewhere in the world, wholesome for food, that was not intended for man to eat; but when he abuses the law, when he steps beyond the bounds of the natural prescription of what is just and right and temperate, he must pay, and pay at once, and pay the uttermost farthing.

There is no one, for example, that pays more dearly than a drunkard, who simply abuses the appetite for what God has put here in this world for legitimate use. He pays. Every one of us sees the living hell of it round about us. Even your temperate drinker—he also pays. Men are coming to believe that no one is so well armed in the use of spirits as he is in abstinence. His head is not so clear, his nerves are not so steady, his reliability under pressure and stress is not so great. There are many, many other kinds of intemperance besides this one, and every one of them brings its sure fruitage.

You see a young man—know him well—you have passed his house perhaps every day—who could not walk a step—had not walked a step for years; crippled beyond all usefulness in the

world, sinking into the grave before gray hairs had come into his head, because he had sinned—excessively sinned. Another young man is brought home in his twenties from a rapid round of excesses and intemperances—you could hardly bear to stand by his side, so bloated and repulsive was he; he comes home before he is thirty to die upon his mother's breast.

"Gene" was a young country lad. The strength of the rocks and the oaks was in his frame. The breadth and the breath of the plains and hills was on his face. He had had charge of his father's estate and affairs, which were not small. He wished to go to college; and he went to a big one. The boys took him in, they showed him all that was to be seen. He had money. He had personal charm. For six months or so things went very merrily.

Then one day his parents received a letter saying, "Gene is ill; not very ill, we hope he will be better soon." Then hard on the heels of the letter came a telegram. "Gene is very ill. Come at once."

They took him South; they took him West; they took him everywhere and did everything that money and love could compass. They were told that he had taken deep cold. Ay, he had taken cold—and more.

And today he sleeps under the prairie who ought to be alive and doing a man's work in the world. He paid in full; and more yet, others helped to pay.

If you had stood by the side of beds where preachers and doctors stand—if you had frequented hospitals as they have done; if you had known the inside life of families as they have, you would never say that they do not know what they are talking about. The way of the transgressor is hard. The road that he treads is thorny and stony, and it leads to death. The soul that sinneth, just in proportion as it sins, shall die. There never was truer word written in Scripture than this: "The wages of sin is death."

Let us turn to some of the other kinds of sins. There is the man who worships the golden calf, material success, material acquisition; or even the man who has that last infirmity of noble minds, the lust for power; have you seen his face, hardened and wrinkled and shrivelled? Yes, now and again you see upon your streets a man whose countenance looks like that of the eagle upon the dollar. We used to talk about the bicycle face, and now we talk about the motor-car face; but worse than these is the money face. The dollar face is indicative of a shrivelled soul. So we might

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follow up any one of the sins of men—the extravagances, the excesses, and every one of them brings its penalty—its painful penalty.

There is a disease which they call the hardening of the eyeball—glaucoma is the technical term. It is extremely painful. Sometimes, in twenty-four hours the sight is all gone; and then sometimes, the blindness passes away and the patient is apparently well until another attack comes; and sometimes the long, slow process of that hardening goes on for sixteen or eighteen or twenty years of exquisite, excruciating pain. The hardening of the eye of the soul is just as painful, just as distressing as any lake of fire could ever possibly be.

These punishments, however, are reformatory and not retributive. We are coming to believe, in our study of penology, that nobody should be punished through revenge; that criminals should be put, not into prisons, but reformatories; sent to school, taught trades; that there should be no definite sentence, but, so far as possible, an indeterminate one. We are beginning to believe that a man may be transformed under punishment, until he may be restored to his home again and given at last the freedom from crime and from the tendency to crime that has held him down. Now, that principle works out in all our human

life. A little child is wild and rebellious. Just a few cuts of a keen switch, and how he does melt and how humble he becomes; his rebellion seems to flow out with his tears. Sometimes a man never looks up to God until the lash is laid upon his back. Sometimes a man never thinks, but rushes blindly on in his course of life until his punishment is visited heavily upon his head. How long his reformation may take must depend upon him.

It is very difficult of belief that any individual is punished for an eternity. Punishment will turn any man—even a fool—some day, some time; and we cannot believe—we cannot find it possible to believe—that there has ever been committed any sin or crime great enough to justify a good God in punishing a poor, little, weak mortal for ever and for ever and for ever. We cannot believe that it is possible for a good God so to be foiled, so to be thwarted, so to fail as that any evil whatsoever should exist for ever in opposition to Him.

This is the way the man in the street reasons. If there is a God, and there is a God, He must be good, and He must be all-powerful; otherwise He would not be God. And if He be God and good and all-powerful, His good purposes must prevail, and ultimately all things must

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become good. Otherwise, God is no God. We cannot well reason otherwise. If we do, we shall be running right up against our own sense of justice and right. Truth is eternal, a lie is temporal. Right is eternal, wrong is temporal. Therefore a time must come when all falsehood and all wrong shall be done away, and truth and right shall be all in all. Otherwise, there are two equal powers, good and evil, neither of which can conquer the other, and there is no God.

Some believe that the soul which should indefinitely rebel against God in spite of all punishment might compel God, through the working of some law about which we know nothing, to destroy it completely, to wipe it out of existence. There are those who think that that will be the end of the persistently and consistently wicked—annihilation. But such belief is contrary to the physical law of the conservation of matter and the conservation of force, which law we have tried to carry over into the spiritual world. Nevertheless, if that helps, if it is valuable, use it; for after all truth is generally to be tested by its value, by its workability.

Let us now turn to the other side of the picture,—to the question of reward. If there is punishment, and if it flows naturally from the

violation of law, then there must also be a course of events which will give to virtue, to courage, to self-control, to determination, and to all the rest of the heroic attributes of men and women their just measure of reward. God begins to reward us—does He not?—in this life without waiting for the unknown. We are like children at school; we get just as much advancement as we work for and deserve in this life, and then we go on into the endless reaches of eternity, not merely enjoying the reward, but expanding, and developing the virtues upon which the reward is grounded. Heaven then becomes not a place with jasper walls and golden streets and harps. Heaven becomes a state into which free spirits pass, now and for ever.

A saintly old man was working in his garden one Saturday, when there came by a neighbor—a Seventh-Day Adventist—on his way to church.

“Aren’t you afraid you’ll not go to heaven—working as you are on the Sabbath Day?” said the latter.

“Not at all,” smiled the old man, from among his roses and his grapes. “Not at all. I’m in heaven now!”

It was a sage reply, and the old man knew all its implication.

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The one truly great quatrain in the "Ru-báiyát" is this:

"I sent my soul through the invisible,
Some letter of that after life to spell;
But by and by my soul came back to me,
And answered, 'I myself am Heaven and Hell!'"

We believe, then, in heaven—not a literal heaven any more than a literal hell; but we believe in a spiritual heaven that begins here and continues for ever. We believe in a growth that begins in a poor, feeble way in us here, and through threescore years and ten makes a certain amount of progress; and then, through thousand after thousand of years, when we shall be free from the trammels of this flesh, makes additional progress and development on, on, on, upward, always upward toward the light. So we believe in the persistence of personality after death. We shall know each other there. If we persist as personalities we must know those personalities that "we have loved long since and lost awhile"; and we must see them once again, or we shall be like lost souls upon the marshes and dark lakes. We must see and clasp them once more. We must commune with them, talk with them more freely than we were ever able to talk with them here, hindered as we are by the flesh and by the limitations of communication that are ours. When

spirit with spirit shall meet, hearts shall flow into hearts, communicating without tongue and without speech; and we shall need no eyes to see; but shall know even as also we have been known. We shall work,—aye, we shall have tasks to do. We shall sing,—yes, if we feel like it, we shall sing. We shall laugh when we wish to laugh. We shall feel as we always have felt, spiritually, emotionally, profoundly.

There is truth in the “Last Chanty” of the sailors who were dissatisfied that there was no more sea; tired of the glassy floors and windless shore; and who plead that the Lord would “Take back the golden fiddles and let them beat to open sea.”

So the Lord

“Called the good sea up to Him,
And ’stablished its boundaries unto all eternity;
That such as have no pleasure
For to serve the Lord by measure,
Might enter into galleons and serve Him on the sea.

“Sun, wind, and rain shall not fail from off the face
of it,
Stinging, ringing spindrift, nor the fulmar flying free;
And the ships shall go abroad
To the glory of the Lord
Who heard the silly sailor-folk and gave them back
their sea.”

It was a brave epitaph Robert Louis Stevenson wrote for himself, which is engraved upon his headstone in far-away Samoa:

“Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and there let me lie;
Gladly I lived, and gladly die;
And I lay me down with a will.

“And this be the verse you grave for me:
‘Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
The hunter home from the hill.’”

It is the song of a man with a philosophy of life and death sufficient to maintain him in the hardness of the one, and sustain him in the darkness of the other. There was no doubt a strong stream of hereditary Christianity in the philosophy, even though it does not rise to the surface in the poem.

Not less brave and far more buoyant with hope and faith is the swan-song of the poet-laureate of the Christians, when he was about to cross the bar. Though it was sunset and the time of the evening star, though he heard the bell and the one clear call for him, he prayed that there might be no moaning of the bar when he put out to sea; for he said:

“I hope to see my pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar!”

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